

Faith for All of Life
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FAITH FOR ALL OF LIFE

PROCLAIMING THE AUTHORITY OF GOD'S WORD OVER EVERY AREA OF LIFE AND THOUGHT

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Why All This Fuss About Pierre Viret?

Martin G. Selbrede



While true that the 500th anniversary of the birth of a key figure in Christian history is inherently worthy of note, there is something doubly valuable in recounting the work of Pierre Viret. I won't steal the thunder of the writers who've contributed to this issue by explaining why it is that Viret's influence has been neglected by subsequent generations (it's not the reason you'd think). But Viret's significance relative to Chalcedon's work, and to the work of R. J. Rushdoony in particular, bears some attention. Why? Because Viret's contributions to the Reformation prove that Rushdoony's work was not a recent innovation in Biblical thinking, but was actually the recovery of a key component of the Reformation itself: the comprehensive application of all of Scripture to all of life.

The relationship in which Viret stands to Calvin, then, becomes important, because many modern theologians wouldn't hesitate to sever these two thinkers from one another, and by implication proceed to sever Rushdoony from Calvin as well, arguing that Rushdoony departs from Reformational thinking. But the recovery of Viret's major contribution to the Reformation turns the flank on such criticisms. The notion of Biblical faith as, literally, the faith for all of life, didn't arise on the world scene when this publication changed its name in the prior decade: it stems from the Reformation itself. And faith for all of life entered into the

“The recovery of Viret, because it is a recovery of the comprehensive application of Scripture, is in no small way parallel to Hilkiyah’s discovery of the book of the law.”

Reformation because it was a Biblical teaching being at long last recovered after the long sleep that the Reformers so profoundly interrupted.

Faith for all of life simply isn't something new under the sun. Faithful Christians passed this way before: it was present in the very midst of the Reformation, it rubbed shoulders with the great Reformers, it was recognized (in the person of Viret) as a highly-respected, compelling aspect of the recovery of Biblical faith in the sixteenth century.

The actual innovation, then, was the church *losing sight* of this comprehensive vision, with the result that subsequent generations have turned their back on these world-changing truths out of ignorance of their birthright. Even well-informed Christians today who “look unto the rock from whence [they] were hewn” (Isa. 51:1) gain a crippled view of the quarry when Viret isn't visible among the chief cornerstones of our Reformation heritage. Crippled vision, in this instance, translates into a crippled worldview: when Viret was lost from sight, the church's view of its Bibli-

cal wellspring, and hence of itself and its mission, was buried. For this reason, Jean-Marc Berthoud graciously co-edited this issue to bring to light what had been so long obscured by twists of historical circumstance.

Is a recovery of Viret as a proto-Rushdoony truly important? Some may argue that the church did just fine with this man's work, seminal in its day, being subsequently sunk into the dustbin of history. But the church can no more do without the key ancient landmarks laid during the Reformation than the people of God could do without God's law, which also went AWOL until Hilkiyah the priest found a copy of it (2 Kings 22:8ff.). Once rediscovered, the book of the law was used to restructure all of life in terms of God's authoritative law-word (2 Kings 23:24). Why? Because comprehensive claims *restructure all of life around the Lord who asserts them*. The recovery of Viret, because it is a recovery of the comprehensive application of Scripture, is in no small way parallel to Hilkiyah's discovery of the book of the law. The impact derives, not from the person of Hilkiyah, or of Viret, but because of the *substance and scope of the claims inherent in what these two men unleashed*.

In Pierre Viret, we have a clear historical context in which the faith for all of life entered the Reformation. Its return, in the work of R. J. Rushdoony and others seeking to assert the crown rights of Christ the King, is no innovation or new heresy.

It is nothing less than the faith once delivered to the saints. 🏰

Pierre Viret: The Unknown Reformer

R. A. Sheats

God works mysteriously, often concealing His purposes and plans from the wondering eyes of men. Even as we seek to understand and search out His ways, we find our sight limited and our knowledge incomplete. Much is veiled from our view. In like manner the visible history of Christ's church is often hidden in clouds of obscurity. For reasons known only to God, He often chooses to conceal some of His greatest treasures, awaiting their rediscovery by the church in His perfect time. Thus it has been with Pierre Viret, a forgotten giant of the sixteenth-century Reformation.

Pierre Viret was born in 1511 in Orbe, a small town in the Pays de Vaud (present-day French Switzerland), to a devout Roman Catholic family. His father Guillaume was a tailor. Of his childhood, Pierre later noted, "I was naturally given to religion, of which however I was then ignorant."¹ His schoolteacher, Marc Romain, was a follower of Luther; thus Viret, while still a lad, was exposed to the teachings of the Reformation.

Viret's parents soon noticed their child possessed an aptitude for learning and sent him to Paris to study for the priesthood. While at college, Viret was converted to the Protestant faith, and fleeing the persecutions rampant in the Roman Catholic stronghold of Paris, he returned to his hometown, Orbe.

Early Ministry

Upon his return to his native village, Viret, at the age of twenty, was implored by William Farel to begin preaching in the town church. Viret, of a naturally "timid and modest disposition,"² was

"The life and theological greatness of Pierre Viret remains unknown to the church at large. Is this also the work of God? Has He thus withheld His Reformer, perhaps awaiting the time when, in His providence, Viret's life and thought shall be most needed for His church?"

quite unwilling to accept such a post. At Farel's continued prodding, however, Viret at last conceded, preaching his first sermon May 6, 1531. Crowds flocked to hear the young preacher, marveling at the eloquence and wisdom of the man they had known from childhood.

Many souls were converted under Viret's preaching, but of greatest importance to the young pastor was the conversion of his two Roman Catholic parents. As he noted later, "I have much occasion to give thanks to God in that it hath pleased him to make use of me to bring my father and mother to the knowledge of the Son of God ... Ah! If he had made my ministry of no other use, I should have had good cause to bless him."³

Throughout the next three years, Viret regularly traveled between several of the surrounding villages to further the work of the Reformation. Accompanied

by Farel, he journeyed first to Grandson, a small town just north of Orbe, which was quickly won to the gospel under the Reformers' preaching. Later that year Viret preached in Payerne, a small village bordering the Catholic canton of Fribourg. It was perhaps here that the young preacher met with his deadliest opposition.

The city was strongly Roman Catholic and violently protested the preaching of the "new faith." Viret, knowing that his teaching was no more than the truth of the Word of God, begged for a public disputation in which he would be permitted to prove his case from Scripture. The Council of Payerne at last acceded to this request and a date was fixed. The night before the disputation, however, Viret, returning home, was ambushed in a solitary field by a priest from the Payerne Abbey. The would-be murderer gravely wounded the young preacher with his sword and left him for dead, thus seeking to douse the Light against which he could not dispute. Discovered by his friends, Viret, half-dead, was slowly nursed back to health and soon continued his work in another city: Geneva.

Reformation in Geneva

In 1534 Viret journeyed to Geneva to again assist Farel in his Reformation work. Geneva was at first quite hostile to the teaching of the new preachers, and another murderous attempt awaited the young men.

At the instigation of the Catholic authorities, a woman, Antonia Vax, was persuaded to eliminate both Farel and Viret by serving them a poisoned spin-

ach soup. Farel, declaring the soup to be too thick, asked for something else to eat. Viret, however, still pale and weak from his sword wounds, was assured by Antonia that the soup would aid in the restoration of his health, and trustingly ate an entire bowl of the poisoned dish. He grew dangerously ill and lay for some time at the point of death.

Upon hearing the news, the townspeople of Geneva mourned the impending loss of their beloved Reformer, exclaiming, “Must the Church be robbed of such a pearl?... Poor Viret! Poor reformers!... Sword-cuts in the back, poison in front ... Such are the rewards of those who preach the Gospel!”⁴

This episode, though so detrimental to the Reformers, also brought much damage to their adversaries as many now looked with suspicion and contempt upon the perpetrators of such a base crime. The priests and monks were henceforth regarded with grave doubt and misgiving, and little more than a year later, through the indefatigable labors of Farel and Viret, the General Council of Geneva officially accepted the Reformation.⁵

Two months after this event, John Calvin entered Geneva, simply planning to remain for the night. Farel, accompanied by Viret, visited Calvin’s lodgings at the Bear Inn and persuaded him to remain to preach in the city. It was this threesome—Farel, Viret, and Calvin—this Triumvirate, as these three Reformers were often termed, that God mightily employed to further His work of Reformation in French Switzerland.

Lausanne Disputation

Soon after Calvin accepted his post in Geneva, Viret was providentially brought to the city of Lausanne, capital of the Pays de Vaud, which had just come under the authority of Bern, a Protestant canton of Switzerland.⁶ Bern, desirous of winning their newly

acquired city to the gospel, organized a public disputation in which the principal elements of the faith would be discussed. All Catholic clergy were required to be in attendance. The defense for the Reformed was offered primarily by Farel and Viret, who ably championed the cause of Christ. Calvin also attended the debate, speaking twice throughout its course. At the close of the week-long disputation, Lausanne declared for the Reformation, and Viret was appointed pastor of the city.

Founding of the Lausanne Academy

Though Lausanne was now officially Reformed, it was still heavily steeped in Catholicism. To rectify the ignorance rampant among the priesthood, Viret determined to begin an academy for the training and education of young men for the ministry. Under the oversight of the Bernese authorities, the Academy was founded in January of 1537 and was the first Protestant and Reformed academy of the French-speaking world.⁷

The Lausanne Academy boasted learned instructors from Italy, Germany, France, and Switzerland. Theodore de Beze, future successor to Calvin in Geneva, was principal of the Academy for nine years.

Many renowned men of the faith received their training at Viret’s Academy, including Zacharias Ursinus and Caspar Olevianus, authors of the Heidelberg Catechism of 1562, and Guido de Bres, author of the Belgic Confession of 1561.⁸

Viret and Calvin

A year after the commencement of the Lausanne Academy, Viret met with a singular joy when the Lord provided him a godly bride. On Sunday, October 6, 1538, Viret and Elisabeth Turtaz, a lady of Orbe, were married. Farel presided over the ceremony.⁹

Two months following these celebrations, Viret was recalled to Geneva after Calvin had been banished from that city. Viret’s loving spirit and gentle character had made him a favorite among the Genevans, and they longed to again have him as their pastor. Known as the *Smile of the Reformation*, Viret worked in Geneva “to rebuild the ruins, to dress the wounds, to reconcile the divers and opposing elements.”¹⁰

Viret remained a year in Geneva, during which time he urged the Council upon several occasions to recall the exiled Calvin. At Viret’s continued appeals, the Council sent to call their former pastor home.¹¹ Calvin, however, was in no way eager to return to the trials and troubles that awaited him in that city, and at first rejected the proposal to return, writing Viret,

I read that passage of your letter, certainly not without a smile, where you shew so much concern about my health, and recommend Geneva on that ground. Why could you not have said at the cross? For it would have been far preferable to perish once for all than to be tormented again in that place of torture. Therefore, my dear Viret, if you wish well to me, make no mention of such a proposal.¹²

While refusing to return to the troubled city of Geneva, Calvin simultaneously harbored hopes of the city’s reformation after learning of Viret’s arrival there. Writing to Farel in February of 1541, he expressed his assurance of the salubrious effects of Viret’s influence on the tumultuous population, “It was a singular joy for me to learn that the Church of Geneva is endowed with the arrival of Viret ... I now foresee that the matter is out of danger.”¹³

Viret, however, could not be dissuaded from calling his friend back to his duty and exerted his utmost influence to convince the reluctant

Calvin to return. Writing again, Viret described the transformation of the city and the people's willingness to receive the gospel,

You cannot imagine the attentiveness with which they listen to my discourses, and what a crowd of men they attract ... such tranquility reigns in the republic, it is completely transformed, and has taken on a wholly new appearance ... The Lord has offered us a most favorable moment. If you neglect it, Calvin, the Lord will certainly punish you for neglecting the Church, and not you only, but also those who restrain you.¹⁴

After many such appeals, Calvin was at last persuaded to return; Viret joyfully assisted him in his reentrance. Having finally restored his friend to his post, Viret at once desired to return to his pastorate in Lausanne, but he was persuaded to remain for several months to aid Calvin. Farel, writing to the pastors of Zurich, noted the importance of Viret's presence in the city of Geneva at this crucial time, "If Viret is recalled [to Lausanne], then surely Calvin and the Church of Geneva shall fall again into ruins!"¹⁵ Calvin also shared this opinion, as is noted by historian Michael Bruening,

Three days after his return, Calvin told Farel, "I have also kept Viret with me, whom I absolutely would not allow to be taken away from me." Now it was Calvin who sought to persuade Viret that he was needed in Geneva. He explained to Farel, "If Viret leaves me, I am completely finished; I will not be able to keep this church alive. Therefore, I hope you and others will forgive me if I move every stone to ensure that I am not deprived of him."¹⁶

A Friend Indeed

Viret's selfless assistance of Calvin was not overlooked by the elder Reformer. The friendship of these two men

expanded significantly during this time and showed itself in a beautiful brotherly relationship growing and deepening throughout the course of their lives.

Viret finally returned to Lausanne in 1542. His absence had been very detrimental to the health of the church, which he found in a terrible state. Writing to Calvin upon his return, he mourned, "I came, I saw, I was dumb-founded (*veni, vidi, obstupui*). If only what we had heard about the state of this church were not so true."¹⁷

Despite Lausanne's manifest need for Viret, Calvin still desired to have his fellow Reformer at his side, and in July of 1544 he urged the Council of Geneva to write to the Bernese lords, requesting permission to permanently retain Viret at Geneva. Upon hearing of the letter, however, the Lausanne counselors and pastors immediately sent their own ambassadors to Bern, begging the lords to reject Geneva's request. Meeting with such a desperate appeal from Lausanne, Bern declined to grant the transfer and ordered Viret to remain in Lausanne. Upon hearing that Geneva's request was refused, Viret wrote to Geneva to express his devotion to the city, assuring them of his love, "As for me, if you so desire, you will always have me as your humble servant, no less than if I were present with you, as truly I am in spirit, though I am distant in person; I will also be joined with you in body as soon as it is the good pleasure of Him who has called us in His service."¹⁸

Though now serving in separate locations, Calvin and Viret continued their friendship through a plethora of letters. A regular correspondence passed between them upon every subject. As one historian noted,

At Calvin's return [to Geneva] Viret joined him as a colleague, and the sweetest epistolary relationship was enjoyed between the two. During nearly

twenty years continual messages passed from Geneva to Lausanne. Everyday news, events involving the Church or State, household troubles, memories, plans, confidences, all are found in this friendly correspondence, which never closes without feeling and emotion, filled with testimonies of the truest affection. The two friends never laid the pen aside except to visit each other, and what a time was their every meeting! "Someone told me," wrote Calvin, "that you are inclined to come to Geneva. I have seized the hope with as much fervor as if you were already here. If such is truly your intention, come Saturday. Your arrival could not be more timely. You will preach for me Sunday morning in the city so that I can preach at Jussy, and join me after dinner. We'll take a visit to Monsieur de Falais; then, crossing the lake, we'll enjoy the pleasures of the country together at the home of our friends Pommier and Delisle, and we shan't return until Thursday ... Above all, you can count on the warmest reception."¹⁹

The Shadow of Death

In 1545 Viret's life was disturbed by another great tragedy. His wife Elisabeth fell ill, and despite Viret's desperate efforts to revive her failing health, she died in March of the following year. Writing of her death to a dear friend, Viret wrote, "The Lord has dealt me such a painful blow ... in the death of my well-beloved wife. He has taken half of myself ... I am so afflicted by this blow that I appear to myself a stranger in my own house."²⁰

Viret's sorrow was so great that Calvin was terrified lest his friend perish under the weight of the blow. Writing his comrade, Calvin begged Viret to come to Geneva for a time: "Come to distract yourself, not only from your sorrow, but also from all your troubles. You need not fear that I will impose any work on you. I will take care that you enjoy your own pleasure in tranquility.

And if anyone bothers you, I will deal with them.”²¹

Knowing Viret’s reluctance to leave his work in Lausanne, Calvin continued to press his dear friend, so much so that Viret could at last refuse no longer, and leaving his pastorate for a short time, Viret journeyed to Geneva to enjoy the company and consolation of his fellow Reformer.

The wonderful harmony and brotherly love existing between these two Reformers is truly an example for all ages. Though each man was called individually and fashioned in a particular way quite distinct from the other, God saw fit to bring these tools together, separately crafted, but each endowed with the same vision: to engage in the work of the Kingdom of Christ. Writing of this holy friendship in a book dedicated to Viret and Farel, Calvin wrote,

It will at least be a testimony to this present age and perhaps to posterity of the holy bond of friendship that unites us. I think there has never been in ordinary life a circle of friends so heartily bound to each other as we have been in our ministry.²²

Battles with the Magistrates

Viret, seeking to further the Reform in Lausanne, did his utmost to turn the formerly ignorant populace into a Christian people. The political structure of the times, however, added great difficulty to this task. The Council of Bern—the political head of Lausanne—reserved to itself much of the church’s jurisdiction. One matter of constant concern to Viret was church discipline. This, he rightly believed, was a tool pertaining solely to the *church* authorities, not the civil government. The lords of Bern, on the other hand, reserved this right to themselves alone, requiring Viret and other pastors to submit all requests for discipline to the Bernese for either approval or rejection.

Throughout his pastorate at Lausanne, Viret made numerous journeys to Bern to request the magistrates to cede him the authority necessary to establish and build the church. Viret pled with the Bernese lords, assuring them that a true church *must* be permitted to govern its members. Bern, desirous of retaining its power, refused to relinquish such authority to the church, declaring that it was the state’s prerogative to govern all.

Viret knew well that a lack of discipline would result in no church at all. Pastors, he stated, must be allowed to enforce “this discipline, by which we can distinguish between swine, dogs, and sheep, according to Christ’s teaching.”²³ “Discipline,” he noted, “can be abandoned, if the administration and use of the Word of God and the sacraments are also abandoned, for the Word and the sacraments cannot be properly administered without it.”²⁴

Despite the continued appeals, Bern refused to allow Viret to exercise church discipline or restrict the Lord’s Table. They stated that all must be permitted to participate and any pastor who refused to administer communion was to be immediately discharged. The Lausanne pastors, following Peter’s initiative (Acts 5:29), sent numerous letters to Bern in which they stated their obligation to follow God rather than men:

We have not been called to this charge [the ministry] to close our eyes, to keep silent, to conceal vice, and to cover the scandals of those who have been entrusted to us, but to be on guard, to be attentive, to unceasingly lift our voice with strength, when needed ... We must do this to discharge our duty in good conscience.²⁵

The dispute finally came to a head in 1558. Writing to Calvin on August 24, Viret confided, “I have more bitter worries than anyone. I am between the anvil and the hammer, and know not

where to turn ... I pray that God does not withhold His directions from me.”²⁶

As Christmas communion approached, Viret announced that he could not in good conscience administer the sacrament without first being permitted to examine and instruct those who wished to partake. Going before the Council of Lausanne, he begged a seven-day postponement of the communion service to provide the time necessary to examine the communicants.

After much debate, the Council agreed to grant the pastors the stipulated time.

When news of the ruling reached Bern, however, the magistrates were outraged at this usurpation of their authority. They sent immediately to Lausanne to countermand the decision of the Council and to dismiss and expel Viret and his colleagues.

Thus ousted, Viret and his associates were ordered to pack their belongings and leave the city. A refuge was soon found in the neighboring town of Geneva, where Calvin welcomed his friend with the warmest affection.

After Viret’s dismissal, Bern appointed other ministers in his stead, but those nominated to fill his place refused, preferring rather to join Viret in exile than submit to Bern’s demands. Numerous professors and students of the Academy also followed the expelled ministers, vastly swelling the numbers of the exiles. Johannes Haller, a contemporary, noted that “over a thousand people migrated from Lausanne to Geneva.”²⁷ The significance of this exodus from the city of Lausanne can scarcely be overstated, for the city’s population at the time was little more than five thousand.²⁸

Of the host of distinguished refugees exiting Lausanne, many of the professors, including Valier, Berault, Merlin, Tagault, and Chevalier, found a work prepared for them upon arrival in

Geneva.²⁹ Within five months of their displacement, Calvin founded his Genevan Academy, employing as its core faculty the outcasts who fled Lausanne. Thus the Lausanne Academy of twenty-two years was relocated, becoming the world-acclaimed Genevan Academy.³⁰

Ministry in France

Geneva's joy at receiving their former pastor again after a "loan" to Lausanne of twenty-two years was unimaginable. The city welcomed the exiled Viret with acclamation and open arms, while the Council declared that Viret would be "received as a minister here and given 400 florins a year and two casks of wine."³¹ Calvin even good-humoredly noted that the house provided to Viret was larger and better furnished than his own.³²

Viret was immediately assigned the Church of St. Germain in which to preach, but the multitudes that pressed in to hear his sermons were so numerous that a new location had to be found to accommodate the crowds. The Council therefore determined to move Viret's preaching to the larger church of St. Pierre, which would provide ample room for the masses desirous of attending the sermons.³³

Viret's time in Geneva was cut short, however, due to a serious illness. In April of 1561 he fell dangerously ill and, fearing that this sickness would soon bring him to the grave, drew up his will on April 12. Concerning this time, he later wrote, "I fell into an illness whereby my body was so debilitated and brought so low that in my judgment I could expect nothing else but to be lowered into the grave. I had never before had a sickness that had brought me so close to death, not even when I was poisoned by the art and cunning of the enemies of the Gospel."³⁴

During the summer months Viret's health was partially restored, but as win-

ter again approached, his doctors urged him to seek a warmer climate in southern France. He therefore left Geneva in early September.

Viret's reputation was so great that the moment he set foot on French soil, he was given immediate authority in the Reformed French churches wherever he chose to go. "Offers poured in requesting Viret to come to such places as Orleans, Avignon, Montauban and Montpellier."³⁵ "When Viret arrived in France, churches from all over the country sought him out. The churches in Nimes and Paris even sent delegates to Geneva to ask officially for his services."³⁶

Viret arrived in Nimes on October 6; the city received him with the greatest warmth.³⁷ Indeed, the churches were not large enough to contain the crowds that sought to hear him; Viret was therefore compelled to preach in open fields and pastures. The multitudes responded eagerly to the Word of God, and on January 4, 1562, in a service lasting six hours, Viret administered communion to over eight thousand believers.³⁸

Friend and foe alike were drawn to the sweetness and gentleness of Viret's preaching. As he preached one day in a field in the Vaunage, the very prior and monks themselves came to listen to the man's words. As Viret explained to his listeners the wonders of the gospel and the blessedness of the Redeemer, his words did not return void: "The success was complete. The priests, the officers, . . . became Protestant, and the abbey consecrated half its revenues to evangelization, and the other half to aid the poor."³⁹

While in Nimes, Viret preached every Sunday and Wednesday to increasingly swelling crowds. He was also employed as a professor of theology at the local Academy, as well as doubling as a peacemaker in several church squabbles.

His presence was sought everywhere; he presided over both provincial and national synods of the French Reformed churches in 1562⁴⁰ and 1563.⁴¹

As Viret's leave of absence from Geneva neared its conclusion, the Council of Nimes grew terrified of losing their pastor. In an effort to retain him, they sent a delegation to the Genevan Council, writing, "The harvest surpasses belief, and the famine is intolerable . . . We need reapers . . . In the name of the God you honor, we beseech and beg with our greatest affection that you leave [Viret] with us."⁴² Despite the desperation of the letter, the Council of Geneva did not grant the request. Indeed, they were so flooded with letters begging for Viret's presence that they at last decided to let Viret himself decide where to proceed. Requests again poured in from Montpellier, Montauban, Orleans, and even Paris. Viret at length decided upon Montpellier; he entered that city in February of 1562.

As with Nimes, Viret's efforts met with exceptional success. "Spectacular results followed with large numbers being won to the side of the Reformed Faith, including nearly the entire faculty of the famous medical college of Montpellier."⁴³ After a short stay, Viret accepted a call to Lyon in late May, where he remained for the next three years. The City Council of Lyon, in writing to the Council of Geneva, expressed their indebtedness to Viret in November of 1562, "We derive more aid and assistance from his learned and holy teaching than from our entire army."⁴⁴ "Without his presence it would be impossible for us to hold our soldiers to their duty."⁴⁵

In March of 1563 Viret's ministry was severely threatened by the issuance of a royal edict forbidding all foreign-born pastors from ministering in France. Because of Viret's renowned Christian

character, however, he was exempted from the edict by request of the Catholics themselves.

A Lasting Legacy

Although the work of the ministry demanded much of Viret's time, he still found opportunity to write. His scholarly production was immense; he was a prolific author, writing over fifty books. His works were bestsellers in his day and were translated into many languages including German, Italian, English, Dutch, and Latin.

Though Viret's works display great depth in their treatment of theological subjects, he nevertheless wrote in an informal, easy-to-understand style. It was often noted that in him was found a theologian who was not afraid to stoop to the ignorant, to use rusticity with the rustics, and to lisp with the children. Indeed, his style of treating deep theological truths made his books beneficial to both the newest convert and the most learned theologian.

While at Lyon, Viret completed his greatest literary work, his three-volume *Christian Instruction in the Doctrine of the Law and the Gospel*. Theologian Jean-Marc Berthoud writes of this theological masterpiece,

[I]f Calvin is incomparable as a dogmatic exegete and polemicist, Viret largely surpasses him as ethicist and apologist. His strength was a domain often neglected because of its complexity: the application of the Word of God to every aspect of life. His *Christian Instruction in the Doctrine of the Law and the Gospel* of 1564 is unquestionably the best commentary on the Ten Commandments that the Christian Church has ever known.⁴⁶

After a difficult—though fruitful—life spent in service to his God, Pierre Viret died in early 1571 at the age of sixty. Like the site of his death and burial, which remains unknown to this

day, the life and theological greatness of Pierre Viret remains unknown to the church at large. Is this also the work of God? Has He thus withheld His Reformer, perhaps awaiting the time when, in His providence, Viret's life and thought shall be most needed for His church? 🏰

R.A. Sheats resides in North Florida and is the senior translator of the Pierre Viret Association.

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Continued on page 24

Pierre Viret: A Christian View of War

Robert D. Linder



The subject of political theory is a vast one, deserving of study and inspiring volumes. It is a discipline that the church has shaped throughout history and must continue to influence. Because political theory and its application have such a profound impact upon our human and social existence, it is critical that the church is always vigilant to speak the Word of God into this important realm.

The unquestionable command that civil government must be limited in its role and jurisdiction is made clear throughout Scripture from Moses to Paul. The socialist/collective experiment imposed by the intellectual and political class of the last century has been concentrated into two essential realms: the welfare state and the warfare state. Time has revealed that these two areas of this new order are the ones most easily corrupted and have led to the dehumanization of man and the bankruptcy of many national treasuries. While the evils of the welfare state have been addressed in recent years by churchmen and various conservative writers, very little has been written concerning the devastating effects of the warfare state.

The French-Swiss Reformer, Pierre Viret, brings his considerable theological wisdom to bear on the modern, inconsistent thinking on war.

Viret: The Forgotten Light

Pierre Viret (1511–1571), Calvin's closest associate, was a prolific writer. Many of his fifty-some books offer a well-developed theology in the issues

“Viret’s observations, though over four centuries past, are as timely as if he were peering through a window to our modern age. His timeless and extraordinary wisdom unmask the accepted political corruption of the present day.”

of church and state, jurisdiction, the Christian duty of the magistrate, and the problem of war. The personal and ministerial experiences of Viret's life fostered his theological development of a comprehensive political theory.

Viret, with Guillaume Farel and Antoine Froment, was in Geneva (1534–1535) in the early days of the French-Swiss Reformation. Under the blessing of the Genevan councils, these three labored with great difficulty to bring the Reformation to this embattled republic.

Later, as the pastor of the Reformed church in Lausanne (1536–1559), Viret continually battled the overreaching arm of the Bernese lords. He spent much time and many trips to Bern dealing with the unwarranted intervention of the magistrates into the affairs of the churches of the Pays de Vaud.

Finally, in 1559 Bern had enough of Viret's resistance and exiled him from his home and church. Viret was never to return to Lausanne. After a brief stay

in Geneva assisting Calvin, Viret spent the last ten years of his life pursuing a dynamic and fruitful ministry in France. Though of Swiss birth, upon entering France, Viret became the immediate leader of the French Reformed church—owing to his exemplary reputation.

Nevertheless, his time in France was tumultuous and was further complicated by the circumstances of the French Civil War. Viret's political theory was molded by his observations and of the circumstances and what he believed to be the interventions of Providence. Thus, his theology of war did not come from his library but from his Bible, as he searched for answers to the political issues of his day.

Viret's observations, though over four centuries past, are as timely as if he were peering through a window to our modern age. His timeless and extraordinary wisdom unmasks the accepted political corruption of the present day. Because Viret's reference point is always the Word of God, his gifted insights are as relevant today as they were in his day.

Viret's View of War

Viret was a man who loved peace and hated violence. Viret said, “I have always loved peace and have always held in horror dissensions and troubles.”¹ He saw all war as bad and the worst of all possible blights. He described war as a “sickness” that plagues human society, and, from a purely utilitarian point of view, he felt that it generally hindered the spread of the gospel. Viret's letters from Lyon during the course of the first war of religion in France revealed how

weary and heartsick he was over the fighting.² His conclusion was that peace was always to be desired over war and that every consideration should be given to maintaining the peace, if at all possible.³ Viret declared, “I desire it to be well considered . . . that every war is so exceedingly dangerous and full of hazard that there is nothing of which Christians must have a greater horror than of taking up arms; I mean not solely against Christians, but against all men of the earth; there is nothing which Christians should be more wary to employ nor which is less suited to their profession.”⁴

Viret considered ambition, avarice, and covetousness to be the fundamental causes of most wars. Men fought other men in order to plunder, pillage, and seize what was not rightfully theirs. Viret denounced this sort of war and predicted divine judgment would take care of such international brigands. He was not willing to support any kind of politically oriented offensive war against other nations. Even the holy idealism that originally motivated the religious Crusades of the Middle Ages did not constitute a just reason for waging war in Viret’s eyes.⁵

Viret did not desire to inspire men by the example of the conquest of Canaan by the Hebrews: “We are not in the same state that the people of Israel were in the land of Canaan. We have not the commandment, nor the leaders and magistrates ordained by God, to drive out and kill the papists and our enemies.”⁶

Business of War

In general, Viret’s attitude toward armies and things military was negative. He hated militarism and detested most mercenaries. He also denounced those who made their living manufacturing military equipment and munitions, because to Viret, profit by the shedding of human blood was particularly vile.⁷

Special targets for his wrath were those who manufactured and used artillery in warfare. He believed that the current instruments of war were horrible enough without resorting to a new and terrible weapon of destruction. He considered artillery an invention of diabolic origin and warned that it was a threat to the very existence of the entire human race. He censured those who would use it to ruin whole villages, killing and maiming human beings by the hundreds. He held that no true Christian prince would use so terrible and destructive a weapon.⁸ All in all, his long discussion of artillery sounds like a modern-day pacifist denouncing the atomic bomb. Still, he was confident that, in the end, spiritual arms are vastly superior to the dreadful artillery: “For spiritual arms are not only stronger than carnal arms without any comparison, but they are also completely invincible.”⁹

In 1566, as Viret reflected on the first war of religion in France, he concluded that it was caused more by non-religious and semi-religious considerations than by genuinely spiritual issues. He observed that differences between Protestants and Roman Catholics had been nourished and deliberately augmented by hateful, ambitious, greedy people who hoped to profit from a war.

Politicians Who Use Religion

Viret said that certain “detestable, villainous” secular rulers and selfish people who “pretended the Christian religion” were exploiting religious differences for their own gain. He exclaimed that he could not understand how these people could “grieve and torment one another like they do over the goods of this miserable life which they should have renounced in order to become *bourgeois* and citizens of the kingdom of heaven.”¹⁰ From what Viret wrote, it is clear that a number of secular leaders had joined the Reform for purely social

and political reasons. To Viret, there was no room in the ranks of the Reformation for men such as these, especially because they set a bad example before the world of what true Christians were like and “greatly abused the name of God, the Gospel, and the Christian religion.”¹¹

Viret on the Just War

It is not that Viret failed to conceive of such a thing as a “just war.” There were two conditions, in his view, under which a legitimate war might be waged.

The magistrate or prince could morally resist invasion of his territory as he intervened to stop aggressive violence. Further, and as a last resort, he was justified to engage in a war for defense and pacification.¹² In the second instance, the prince or magistrate might engage in a just war over what Viret called “a good quarrel”—armed conflict in defense and in chastisement of the wicked.

Viret reasoned that if one magistrate or prince was called to defend one or several innocent people, or if the same were similarly called to punish one or several legitimate offenders, then why could not a group of magistrates or princes legitimately defend a thousand innocent people and punish a thousand wicked individuals? It would be better to take the sword than watch Christianity ruined, he argued.¹³ Still, even a “just war” produces undesirable results, Viret admitted, because the above conditions exist as a last resort only, and the taking up of arms remains a serious enterprise. In sum, all possible measures should be taken to avoid war, yet the pursuit of it—in behalf of a Christian duty against forces of evil—can be just.

Viret Was Critical of Corrupt Government

Viret wrote that the magistrate’s office was ordained by God, but he was never afraid to criticize or defy

unjust action.¹⁴ He was never timid in denouncing kings and princes when they were clearly in the wrong, and he sometimes got in trouble for this sort of thing. He bluntly stated that kings never have the right to steal from peasants, and if they do, they should be treated as a peasant who is caught robbing a king. He called princes who practiced rapine, brigandage, and fiscal corruption “the greatest of robbers.” He laid the responsibility for dishonest public officials at the feet of those who appointed them. Viret was never awed by a prince merely because he bore a lofty title, but considered him to be a mortal man like himself, as prone to error and sin as any other human being.¹⁵ But, even when Viret was at odds with a group of magistrates, whether Bernese Protestants or French Catholics, the magistrates never lost their respect for him, because he was clearly a leader of men and he obviously spoke and argued based on his Christian convictions.¹⁶

Conclusion

The prolific writings of Pierre Viret encompass much more than political philosophy, and the reader is invited to explore them. Would that the modern church might study Pierre Viret and his cogent insights again. How revolutionary it might be if the modern evangelical church would embrace a philosophy of war more closely aligned with the well-articulated views of this forgotten Reformer. However, it is as though the modern church has been hypnotized by and has adopted the cheering of a Western war culture that creates enemies, engages in offensive wars, disposes of rulers and nations at will, and, under the guise of democracy, fabricates a worldwide military empire.

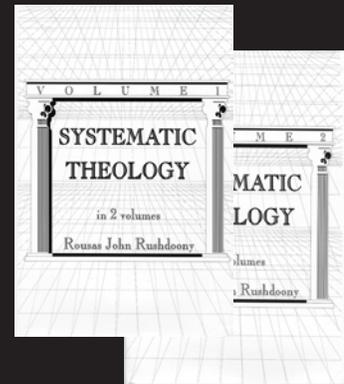
Only the church of Jesus Christ, courageously speaking from the authority of the Word of God, can truly address

the evils of our modern-day culture of war. 🇺🇸

Robert D. Linder is University Distinguished Professor of Kansas State University where he teaches courses in Western Civilization, religious history, the history of baseball and graduate seminars in the History of Christianity. Linder earned his MA and PhD at the University of Iowa under the tutelage of Robert M. Kingdon. Linder has published seventeen books on various aspects of European, American and Australian religious and political history and authored numerous articles. He is currently working on a history of Evangelical Protestantism in Australia, a revision of his book *Civil Religion and the Presidency* and a biography of Pierre Viret, a sixteenth-century Protestant reformer. In addition, Linder has served two terms as mayor of his city of Manhattan and eight years on the city council.

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Pierre Viret and the Total Sovereignty of the Word of God

Jean-Marc Berthoud



In this short article, I will examine the contribution to the ongoing growth of the Kingdom of God by a little-known French

Swiss Reformer, Pierre Viret. I shall briefly endeavor to show his application of the Word of God over every aspect of reality.

Background

Now Pierre Viret, Calvin's most intimate friend,¹ known under the name of the Angel of the Reformation, was by no means a minor or insignificant figure, as most Reformed histories of the Reformation would lead us to imagine. In 1537 Viret founded the first truly Reformed Academy in Lausanne and gave much of his time to the teaching of theology to students who flocked from every corner of Europe. This Lausanne Academy (and not the Genevan, as is too often thought) became the model of all future Reformed academies. By the time of the expulsion of Viret in 1559, the Academy enrolled nearly a thousand students.

But this mild and gentle Christian, a man of the highest spiritual mettle, was also one of the great preachers of the Reformation.

Jean Barnaud writes:

His speech was so sweet that he would continually hold the attention and the interest of those who heard him. His style, which married strength to harmony, was so caressing to the ear and to the intelligence that even those

of his hearers least interested in religious matters, those most impatient of other preachers, would hear him out without difficulty and even with pleasure.²

Melchior Adam remarks of his preaching:

In Lyon, preaching out in the open, he brought thousands to saving faith in Jesus Christ. By the power of his divine eloquence he would even cause those passing by to stop, listen and hear him out.³

But in addition to exercising such great gifts, Viret was in his own right a prolific writer, author of some fifty books.

He wrote a small number of treatises in Latin, but the immense majority of his books were written in French, in a familiar style and in the popular form of dialogues.

Pierre Viret was undoubtedly (with Martin Luther) one of the finest popularizers of the Christian faith in the sixteenth century. But his deep concern for the spiritual needs of the common people never led him (as is all too common today) to debase the content of his theological teaching. It is impossible, in the brief space assigned to this paper, to do proper justice to the astonishing achievements of this extraordinary Christian. If his good friend, John Calvin, was the consummate dogmatist and the prince of exegetes, Pierre Viret must be considered as the finest ethicist and the most acute apologist of the sixteenth century. His monumental *Instruction Chrétienne En La Doctrine*

*De La Loi Et De l'Evangile Et En La Vraie Philosophie Et Théologie, Tant Naturelle Que Supernaturelle Des Chrétiens*⁴ (*Christian Instruction in the Doctrine of the Law and the Gospel and in True Christian Philosophy and Theology, Both Natural and Supernatural*) is without doubt his major theological work and can well bear comparison, in its own domain, with Calvin's *Institutes*.

Pages 249 through 674 constitute a complete treatise on the detailed application of the Ten Commandments to every aspect of reality. It is the finest exposition of the law of God that it has been my privilege to read. The only work I know that in any way bears comparison to this masterpiece is Rushdoony's *The Institutes of Biblical Law*.⁵ Not only do we find in Viret a detailed application of God's Word to the practical problems of Christian living in every aspect of personal and social life, but this is done with an admirable sense of theological balance.

In the preface Viret sets forth his central purpose with the utmost clarity.

Thus God has included in this Law every aspect of that moral doctrine by which men may live well. For in these Laws he has done infinitely better than the Philosophers and all their books, whether they deal with Ethics, Economics or Politics. This Law stands far above all human legislation, whether past, present or future and is above all laws and statutes edicted by men. It follows that whatever good men may put forward has previously been included in this Law, and whatever is contrary to it

is of necessity evil ... This Law, if it is rightly understood, will furnish us with true Ethics, Economics and Politics.⁶

And Viret concludes his preface with these words:

For as it can only be God Himself who is able to give us such a perfect Law by which we are truly enabled to govern ourselves, likewise it is only He who can provide us with Princes and Magistrates, Pastors and Ministers gifted with the capacity of applying this Law.⁷

Viret's Political Thinking

Here of great value is Robert D. Linder's pathbreaking study on Viret's political thinking. After having described what for Viret was the normative rule of the Word of God for both ecclesiastical and theological matters, Linder defines his thinking in these terms:

The Scriptures also contained statements concerning the state and, insofar as they applied to secular government, they represented God's will for that institution. Thus the secular state was seen by Viret as a de facto creation derived directly from God himself but governed in harmony with the rules and precepts contained in the Holy Scriptures.⁸

For in Viret's eyes,

Viret felt that all laws affecting public morals and related to spiritual values should be drawn directly from the moral law of God. However, he believed that these absolute and eternal laws of God had to be geared to the times in which people lived and the national temperament of the country to which the laws were to be applied.⁹

Linder states, moreover:

Viret's notion that the prince was below the law is extremely interesting and very different from the absolutist theory placing the king above the law.¹⁰

Viret puts it this way:

"Pierre Viret was undoubtedly (with Martin Luther) one of the finest popularizers of the Christian faith in the sixteenth century. But his deep concern for the spiritual needs of the common people never led him (as is all too common today) to debase the content of his theological teaching."

For prince and magistrate must be subject to the laws of the land and conform their rule to them. For they are not rulers of the law but servants thereof, as they are servants of God from whom all good laws proceed.¹¹

On the question of extent of the application of the detail of the Mosaic law to our present situation, Viret held a significantly different position from that of Calvin. This is how Linder defines this difference:

Viret, unlike Calvin, was ready to extend openly the authority of the Bible over the State.¹²

Viret's Economic Discernment

In a book on the nature of the study of history in the latter part of the sixteenth century, the Marxist historian, Claude-Gilbert Dubois, pays considerable attention to Viret's Biblical vision of history and in so doing brings to light the remarkable economic discernment of our Swiss Reformer. Dubois' analysis is concentrated on the study of Viret's masterpiece in apologetics, *Le monde a l'empire et le monde démoniaque*. This book, says Dubois, could well be considered a treatise in economics written some two hundred years in advance of its time. Though in total disagreement with Viret's theocentric conservatism,

Dubois was nonetheless outspoken in his admiration of our author's perception of contemporary economic currents. For Viret saw in the anarchical monopolistic capitalism developing before his indignant gaze a growing practical opposition to God's law and the rise of a thoroughly anti-Christian society. Viret saw in the progressive attachment of many of his contemporaries to material wealth (a fascination severed from all sense of stewardship and accountability to God for the use of one's riches) a particularly vile form of idolatry where the rapidity of growth in opulence was in direct proportion to the loss of religion and morality.

Dubois writes:

What is the true character of the social degradation Viret perceives in the history of his time? Its origin is theological in nature, linked as it is to human sin. It manifests itself immorally by the perversion of the created order. But it takes on the modern form of a specifically economic scandal: a perverted economic order, an unethical distribution of riches, provoked by the circulation of wealth in one direction only, its accumulation in the hands of a few. Such are the signs of the corruption that reigns in the world today.¹³

Viret writes:

The greatest evil that can be imagined is when the public purse is impoverished and individual men wealthy. This is an evident sign that the commonwealth is in an unhealthy condition, that public policy is in weak and incapable hands and that the state is under the domination of thieves and bandits who make of it their prey.¹⁴

For Viret, such an egotistical, cumulative concentration of wealth runs completely counter to the Biblical doctrines of stewardship, of charity, and of personal sacrifice. In itself it is a clear indication of the decadence of a society and calls forth future purifying social

disasters and divine judgments. For the economic mechanisms that lead to such an unfruitful concentration of wealth in the hands of a financial oligarchy prepare the way for those social and political catastrophes that will inevitably destroy such an amoral and irresponsible ruling class.

Viret saw very clearly that this new oligarchy made abundant use of its monopolistic domination of the apparatus of the state to appropriate the riches of the whole nation by disrupting the natural circulation of wealth in the usual channels of production and exchange. For Viret, this stifling of the economic blood flow of industrial production and commercial exchange by a parasitical oligarchy must be broken if an equitable distribution of wealth is to be reestablished and the economic health of the society restored.

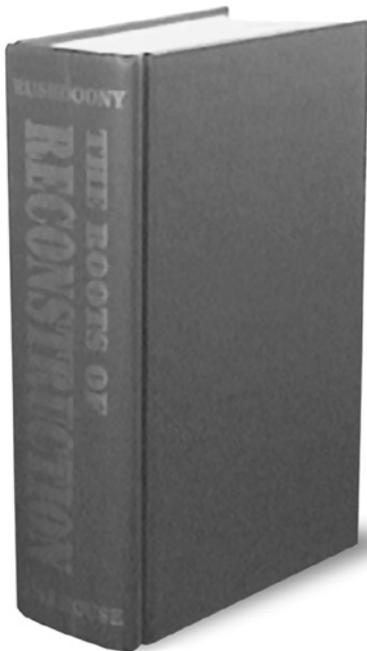
This is a brief evocation of the astonishing life and labors of Pierre Viret, that faithful servant of Almighty God who all his life labored to bring every thought of his contemporaries captive to the obedience of Jesus Christ and of His total Word. 🏰

Jean-Marc Berthoud was born in 1939 in South Africa from Swiss missionary parents and lives in Lausanne, Switzerland. He holds Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Arts with Honors degrees from the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa. He is the editor of the review *Résister et Construire*, president of the Association *Vaudoise de Parents chrétiens* in Switzerland, and of the Association *Création, Bible et Science*, and is the author of numerous books.

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God's Minister: The Civil Magistrate

Thomas Ertl



As we look back over two millennia of Western history, a picture emerges of the struggles, triumphs, and defeats of the church.

The early church was marked by a great faith overcoming insurmountable odds, triumphing over paganism and the despotic Roman Empire.

That victory gave Europe a thousand years of Christendom, ending human sacrifice and producing unimagined liberty, limited and representative government, the dignity of labor, respect for women, and manifold human advancements. The church, though far from perfect, created a civilization of life the world had never before seen.

It was a time when, as Otto Scott said, "God reigned and men administered." It was an era when civil magistrates more clearly understood their calling under God and governed accordingly. From Christendom a developed Christian order civilized Europe, creating an environment of civil liberty that generated tremendous progress and wealth. The West grew rich, a reward that often comes with its own challenges.

Over the last two centuries a new religion and civil rule has appeared, an order of atheistic and autonomous man, a rejection of the previous Christian order, whose modern roots drew their inspiration from the French Revolution. No modern political movement has equaled the alluring rhetoric of the Revolution, with its seductive promise of freedom from the restraints of

Christianity, its heralding of the golden era of man, a new birth of liberty, and a people's paradise, all of which still captivates hearts.

Contrary to its promises, this 200-year experiment has produced a bloodletting inconceivable to all previous eras, a crippling moral debauchery, and worldwide financial slavery. Nonetheless, the present disciples of this revolution against God have realized the dream of their founders, a total secular state in which God has been made irrelevant and illegal. Men, having lost their religious faith, now govern without restraints, seeking to usurp the powers of God and dominate others. In the new atheistic order the magistrate has become the politician, having abandoned his God-ordained purpose and calling.

This article will briefly focus on one realm of Christian political theory: the role and responsibility of the civil magistrate as understood Biblically by the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformers, particularly the French-Swiss Reformer, Pierre Viret.

The Magistrates as Guardians of the Faith

Georges Bavaud, in his book *Le Réformateur Pierre Viret*, states:

Within the context of Christianity, the charge of the magistrate is clearly distinguished from that of the ministers of the Church, who alone bear the responsibility of proclaiming the Word of God. The ultimate concern of the civil servants, however, is the same as that of the ecclesiastical pastors: to lead Christians to the Kingdom of Heaven.¹

The magistrate is, Viret writes, the defender of the two tables of the Decalogue: "The title which Aristotle gave the magistrates ... agrees well with what Moses wrote in [Genesis 3:24, 4:14, 9:1-7, Exodus 18:12-16,] Deuteronomy 1:9-18, and St. Paul in the epistle of Romans (13:1-7). What is this title? He calls them Keepers of the Law."²

Viret continues: "We must understand that they also have the care of the souls of their subjects, that the keeping and preservation of the entire Law and of both tables is committed to them, and that they serve for the salvation of men by using their power and authority to uphold holy doctrine, the true service of God."³

Robert D. Linder in his book, *The Political Ideas of Pierre Viret*, states:

[Viret] paint[s] a picture of the ideal relationship between state and church. Christian magistrates were better equipped to understand and co-operate with the program of the true Church and, as Viret observed: "The best magistrates are Christian magistrates."⁴

Perhaps the best statement of Viret's concept of an ideal magistrate is found in the text of a sermon he preached on March 12, 1559, at Geneva. Viret told his hearers that the office of those princes and magistrates who bore the name Christian was not to persecute the gospel but "to sustain the truth of God and to be foster-fathers [literally 'nursing fathers'] of his Church." He went on to explain that Christian magistrates would "occupy themselves diligently with maintaining the honor and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, pure doctrine in his

Church and the true discipline.”⁵

The role of the true Christian prince and the true Christian magistrate as a “guardian” or “foster-father” of the church was a dominant theme in Viret’s political ideology. Twice in his *Instruction chrétienne* of 1564 he uses the term to describe the office of the prince and magistrate, and in the *Dialogues du desordre* he writes that “the kings and queens, princes and princesses will nourish and be nourished by the Church.” The same idea was developed in a portion of his *Traitez divers* of 1559 and in his *L’Interim* of 1565.⁶

Yet, despite all of his insistence on the role of “true princes” and “true magistrates” as “guardians” and “foster-fathers” of the true church of God, Viret was not in favor of either a state church or a church state. His writings frequently state or imply a strict separation of the functions of church and state.

Henri Vuilleumier, in his book *Notre Pierre Viret*, states:

No more than the other Reformers did Viret dream of a “free Church” in the modern sense of the word. He never conceived of a Church separated from the State anymore than he dreamed of a State neutral or indifferent to religion. In his eyes, as a rule, no antagonism existed between civil society and its powers on the one hand, and religious society and authority on the other ...

God, in order to govern people, in order to establish His reign among men, instituted two types of ministers. He gave “particular charge” of souls to one; to the other, the body and goods. Ministers of the Word and ministers wielding the Sword, pastors and magistrates, must lend each other mutual aid. Both, each in its own particular sphere, had as its mission to lead all people under the obedience of their Head in all.⁷

Magistrate as Civil Pastor

Bavaud, describing Viret’s understanding of magistrates and pastors, states:

To better reveal both the distinction of their functions and their profound unity, Viret employs an analogy of the body and soul. Just as man, in both his body and soul, is wholly subject to the lordship of the Creator, so also the magistrate and the ecclesiastical minister both merit the title pastor, and are both in the service of the one and only Jesus Christ, Head of the People of God. Viret wrote:

“Thus just as man is composed of both body and soul, so also God has ordained that there be two types of pastors ... [B]ecause it is exceedingly difficult—indeed, impossible—for man to attend to one thing without also looking after the other, God has limited to each one his office and calling, and has given to one the very particular charge of souls; to the other that of the body and goods. And just as within a body there are many members, yet nevertheless but one head and heart, thus also the Christian people must not be a body in which all are members, without possessing a head and heart—that is, Jesus Christ—who alone is the true Head, who has raised up the evangelical pastors and civil magistrates who must be as the eyes of all poor people—to direct and lead them under their Head, Jesus Christ.”⁸

The sixteenth-century Protestant Reformers are of the same mind as Viret. Heinrich Bullinger (1504–1575), leading pastor of Zurich and friend of Viret and Calvin, writes concerning the magistrate in his Second Helvetic Confession (1566):

[H]e shall, after the example of the most holy kings and princes of the people of the Lord, advance the preaching of the truth, and the pure and sincere faith, and shall root out lies and all superstition, with all impiety and

idolatry, and shall defend the Church of God. For indeed we teach that the care of religion does chiefly appertain to holy magistrates.⁹

Guido de Bres, student of Viret, and author of the Belgic Confession of Faith (1561), writes of the civil government:

Their task of restraining and sustaining is not limited to the public order but includes the protection of the Church and its ministry in order that the kingdom of Christ may come, the Word of the gospel may be preached everywhere, and God may be honored and served by everyone, as He requires in His Word.¹⁰

Viret and the Reformers envisioned a church and state functioning within their own jurisdictions, but walking together, serving God, and having the same goal: a Christian society.

Magistrates to Employ the Word of God

In the Lausanne Disputation of 1536 Viret declares:

[C]ivil magistrates, because their office pertains more to civil affairs—those which concern the body and goods rather than the soul and conscience—employ ... [also] the Word to admonish, exhort, rebuke, and correct, as the ministers of the Gospel.¹¹

Linder adds:

Viret was bold to point out that although secular laws were part of God’s plan for the race, these laws should be based upon and be subordinate to the Holy Scriptures. In discussing this problem in his book *De l’estat*, he summed it up this way:

“For the Devil is not able to reign or govern, except through tyranny, and by tyranny. But when the Law reigns and commands, it is God who reigns and governs, and not man, who is nothing except the minister of God, which is a title more honorable than the greatest kings and princes of the world are able to have.”¹²

Viret believed that the state rested directly upon the laws of God and that the prince was bound to rule by those laws. “A good prince,” said Viret, “should observe those laws which God has given him and govern his people according to the same, for he is ordained of God to be a prince for no other purpose.”¹³

Bullinger concurs, writing in his Confession:

Let him, therefore, hold the Word of God in his hands, and look that nothing be taught contrary thereunto. In like manner, let him govern the people committed to him of God with good laws made according to the Word of God in his hands, and look that nothing be taught contrary thereunto.¹⁴

Bullinger’s language paints a vivid picture of the magistrate as a man under God’s authority contemplating Holy Scripture as he considers how to govern his people.

Two Rival Religious Systems

The world is in a philosophical conflict, a battle of ideas, worldviews, and more so a battle of religions. The conflicting question is who will rule, or first, who is divine, God or man?

History has left us with two choices: two religions and two orders. It is a choice between the infallibility of God and the “infallibility” of man.

Given the clear historical accounts of these two rival systems, men still choose the consequences of moral degeneracy and civil tyranny rather than be ruled by God. Unmoved, they add to their rebellion by stirring the public fear of the superior Christian civil order.

Atheistic philosophers from Rousseau to Sartre have given the world a flood of confused and self-contradictory explanations of truth and philosophies of life. Gone are all the vain hopes and empty dreams of their promised messianic age of man. Of

their genius and mountains of writings, all that remains is a philosophy of the pragmatism of raw political power. This power-religion has in time debased the God-ordained office of the civil magistrate.

In contrast to secularism, the Christian religion and its Bible gives men the knowledge of a comprehensive order of life from a transcendent God. In God’s Word men receive a true understanding of the calling and responsibility of the civil magistrate.

The Christian order establishes two critical foundations of the duty of the magistracy. First, the Biblical understanding of human sin and man’s depravity is the clear limitation of his power and jurisdiction within his administration of justice. Second, as a minister of God he must aid the church in its work and declaration of the gospel. For the magisterial office is an indispensable aid to public morality.

Conclusion

So effective was the French Revolution with its new civil order and captivating gospel of democracy, that today there is virtually no contrary thought within the intellectual and ruling classes of the West. Sadly, this deception of the Revolution has also captured much of the modern church—a church which, though enslaved to a contrary worldview and surrounded by tyranny, boasts of its “freedom” while ignorant of its own history and true liberty.

Christian leaders and political conservatives have sounded the call back to a constitutional republic. But unless this republicanism is built firmly on the Christian civil order defined by Holy Scripture, it will fail. The skilled politician of the Revolution, appealing to the corrupt nature of man, with his compelling defense of the virtues of majority rule, can nullify any constitution. Any civil rule void of the Christian order will

produce a governance that will negate the best of constitutions.

The order of the Revolution seems to be running its course, and like never before its end is visible. Its passing will be common to all of man’s rebellion, the total judgment of God. The question remains: when this present revolutionary order expires, will the church have the courage to identify the answers and provide the leadership to bring God’s creation into a new age of faith, superior to the old Christendom?

If Christianity is to be believed again, the people of God must envision a day when they determine culture and begin to labor for a new age when God again reforms His church, redeems the lost, and when the proper role of the civil magistrate is restored. This restoration would not be a state church, but one in which neither church nor state seeks to rule each other, both walking side by side with the holy desire to extend Christ’s glorious Kingdom upon the earth.

No matter how visionary or inconceivable this may seem in our post-Christian age, the church cannot believe otherwise. Does not all authority in heaven and earth belong to Jesus Christ? And are not both magistrate and pastor ministers of God? Will not Christ’s last command to the church be fulfilled, when all the nations are disciplined and freely come to bow their knee to Christ the King? 🏰

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1. Georges Bavaud, *Le Réformateur Pierre Viret* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1986), 333.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Robert D. Linder, *The Political Ideas of Pierre Viret* (Geneva: Droz, 1964), 118.

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Pierre Viret: A Forgotten Giant of the Reformation

by Jean-Marc Berthoud

(Tallahassee, FL: Zurich Publishing, 2010)

Reviewed by Lee Duigon



Usually it's wise not to judge a book by its cover; but in this case, the book's cover has something important to tell us about its subject.

Artist James Mathewuse, commissioned by the Pierre Viret Association (www.pierreviret.org), worked from centuries-old woodcuts and engravings to reconstruct the face and posture of Pierre Viret (1511–1571). The result is greater than the sum of its parts.

Look closely, and you'll see more than just a typical, grim, Reformation figure in black robes, black scholar's hat, and long, black beard. Look closely at Pierre Viret's portrait. Now can you see the twinkle in his eye? Can you see that he is just about to break into a smile? It's as if he has some pleasant thought in mind, which he is about to share.

The portrait is an excellent introduction to the word-portrait of Viret drawn up by Jean-Marc Berthoud in this handsomely produced little book (just 85 pages, not counting the appendix). Now open it and meet the man.

Bringing Him Back

First, why is Viret “forgotten”? Viret has been called “the Angel of the Reformation,” but most Christians have never heard of him. Yet he was a great scholar and teacher with copious writings to his credit, who “brought the Reformation to Geneva and the rest of French Switzerland” and was one of John Calvin's

dearest friends (p. viii).

The biggest problem is that Viret's works, more than 50 books, have not been translated into modern languages. The Pierre Viret Association has launched an ambitious program to rectify that.

Viret's books, according to the Association, “were penned in a style of French in some ways comparable to King James English. Because of the plethora of differences existing between sixteenth century and modern French, an expert in the French of that period must first edit Viret's works in order to annotate the text and explain the archaic language so as to render it accessible to present common usage. After this process is completed, the books may then be translated into English ... The work of translating Volume I [of Viret's *Christian Instruction in the Doctrine of the Law and the Gospel*] has been proceeding for well over a year. Andrew Muttitt of Scotland is currently employed with this work, and hopes to complete this first volume by the end of the year.”¹

In the meantime, Berthoud has written his book to introduce Viret to modern readers. That is his book's purpose, and he succeeds admirably: it makes us want to know more about Viret and his teaching.

A Winsome Style

“Pierre Viret was undoubtedly (with Martin Luther) one of the finest popularizers of the Christian faith in the sixteenth century,” writes Berthoud

(p. 23). Quoting Philip Schaff, “His sermons were more popular and impressive than those of Calvin, and better attended” (p. 16). Quoting from contemporaries of Viret, “His speech was so sweet that he would continually hold the attention and the interest of those who heard him. His style, which married strength to harmony, was so caressing to the ear and to the intelligence that even those of his hearers least interested in religious matters ... would hear him out without difficulty and even with pleasure.” And, “By the power of his divine eloquence he would even cause those passing by to stop, listen and hear him out” (p. 20).

Calvin himself praised Viret for his “joyful and pleasant manner,” and said of Viret's impact on his listeners, “in their very amusement they receive instruction” (p. 22). Of Viret's instructional dialogues, Calvin said, “the reader will both draw solid and excellent instruction, and find good occasion for laughter,” and so on (pp. 22–23).

But Viret had more to offer than just a pleasant and humorous style. He was, says Berthoud, “the finest ethicist and the most acute apologist of the sixteenth century. His monumental *Instruction chrétienne* ... [*Christian Instruction in the Doctrine of the Law and the Gospel and in True Christian Philosophy and Theology, Both Natural and Supernatural*] is without a doubt his major theological work, and can well bear comparison, in its own domain, with

Calvin's *Institutes*" (p. 24). Berthoud also cites a scholar who compares it to R. J. Rushdoony's *Systematic Theology*: "[I]t grapples theologically in a very concrete manner with the problems that contemporary men struggle with today" (p. 24).

Ironically, the fact that Viret wrote in the French of his own time, making his work accessible to any literate person of his day, is what has made him a "forgotten giant" to later ages. If only he had written in Latin! His works would have been translated into English long ago.

Viret's Wisdom

Berthoud devotes chapters to Viret as Reformer, ethicist, apologist, economist, and philosopher, demonstrating that Viret was all of those things and more.

Viret's *Christian Instruction*, writes Berthoud, includes "the finest exposition of the Law of God that it has been my privilege to read" (p. 27), comparing it to Rushdoony's *The Institutes of Biblical Law* in its "detailed application of God's Word to the practical problems of Christian living in every aspect of personal and social life" (p. 28). In Viret's own words:

"This Law stands far above all human legislation, whether past, present, or *future*, and is above all laws and statutes edicted by man ... This law, if it is rightly understood, will furnish us with true Ethics, Economics, and Politics" (pp. 28–29).

Viret, says Berthoud, was more thorough-going than Calvin in his application of Biblical law to every aspect of life. He provides intriguing selections of Viret's writing and reasoning: for instance, Viret's ability to relate counterfeiting money to the counterfeiting of God's Word itself (pp. 43–45). Viret chose to do this in the form of dialogues, a device that makes for fairly lively reading and must have been quite

impressive when delivered in a sermon.

As an apologist and an observer of nature, "Viret reasons in a thoroughly Biblical way as a man who has not been intellectually and morally emasculated by what we can call epistemological surgery." Berthoud follows up with a trenchant observation of his own:

"Such mental impoverishment results from the common acceptance, first by the world and then by the Church, of the cultural domination of our whole culture by a purely mathematical model of the universe (the so-called scientific worldview, valid in fact only in its strictly limited domain, that of the measurable) as normative of every aspect of reality."

This is wisdom. We can hear echoes of it in C. S. Lewis' *The Screwtape Letters*. For instance: "You will notice that we have got them completely fogged about the meaning of the word 'real' ... The general rule which we have now pretty well established among them is that in all experiences which can make them happier or better only the physical facts are 'real' while the spiritual elements are 'subjective'; in all experiences which can discourage or corrupt them the spiritual elements are the main reality and to ignore them is to be an escapist ... Your patient, properly handled, will have no difficulty in regarding his emotion at the sight of human entrails as a revelation of Reality and his emotion at the sight of happy children or fair weather as mere sentiment."²

How much damage has been done, and how much unhappiness brewed up, by this paganish division of God's world into "matter versus spirit," "real versus unreal," or some such thing? Viret stands for the Biblical proposition that man, like the rest of God's creation, is an indivisible whole consisting of matter *and* spirit. Pierre Viret, C. S. Lewis, R. J. Rushdoony, and Jean-Marc Berthoud

see and share in a much vaster reality than that allowed by so-called science, an alias for mere materialism. It's a "science" of only one aspect of reality, and hence no science at all. Dare we say, as Viret himself might say, that it's not *real* science?

Viret's Insight

"Pierre Viret's great respect for God's law endowed him with an extraordinary lucidity and discernment in the field of economic analysis," Berthoud writes, blending an understanding of economics "some two hundred years in advance of its time" with "theocentric conservatism" (p. 61). Viret wrote of "deformed Christians," not "reformed," who worshiped wealth and tried to use their new liberation from Rome as an excuse for amoral greed (p. 62). In his own words:

"The greatest evil that can be imagined is when the public purse is impoverished and individual men are wealthy. This is an evident sign that the commonwealth is in an unhealthy condition, that public policy is in weak and incapable hands and that the state is under the domination of thieves and bandits who make of it their prey" (pp. 63–64).

Does that sound familiar? In the driver's seat of the all-powerful state are thieves and bandits. Yes, it sounds depressingly familiar.

Viret addressed the theme of "the State's financial voracity, its desire to tax every aspect of human activity" (p. 67). "Since the beginning," wrote Viret, "this tyrannical system of universal taxation has never decreased but has rather constantly grown. For princes and nobility alike never consider the ordinary revenues and taxes at their disposal as a necessary limitation to their style of life, projects, and ambitions. Rather

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A Sketch: Homeschooling and Economic Collapse

David Tulis



The crackup of Israel after the death of Solomon was accomplished by a feckless son who rejected the wise counsel of older men and took the dare offered by the younger advisers. To do what? Raise taxes.

Solomon's son Rehoboam met with the disgruntled tribes led by Jeroboam, who had been anointed by a prophet as king. To be decided was whether the level of taxation and regulation imposed under King Solomon would be reduced. "Your father made our yoke heavy," Jeroboam pleaded. "[N]ow therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you."

Solomon's son rejected this plea with provocative language: "[W]hereas my father put a heavy yoke on you, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!"

The people of the tribal confederation answered the king, "What share have we in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Now, see to your own house, O David."

This declaration was an act of separation, of walking out of the grouping of the twelve tribes under an elected king—hence the division of Israel into the northern and southern kingdoms and their intermittent wars.

This act of separation, of walking out of the grouping of the 12 tribes

under an elected king, is something homeschoolers, too, have done. I've heard good argument that the Israelites should not have revolted from their tribal covenant. Still, confronted by the intolerable tax, as it were, of the government school, thousands of families across the United States have said, "To your tents, O Israel." Rather than accept a system of statism undergirded by a variety of religious conceits, Christians have said, "You go your way, and we go ours."

The collapse of the kingdom of Israel followed an era of incredible prosperity under Solomon, who excelled in trade and who brought so much wealth into Jerusalem that precious metals traded at discount.

Homeschoolers have been separate from the government school for roughly the fortieth year, marking a time in which the wealth and power of the American empire have hit their peak and the United States seems to have entered a long process of retrogression and default.

Being separate in education, Christians may prove better prepared to deal with a long-warned-of economic crisis whose tremors were first felt in 2008, led by a train of corporate bankruptcies and federal bailouts. Indicators in the financial press suggest the meltdown is just getting warmed up. In God's providence, it promises to smash the dollar, bring inflation, increase joblessness, expand government debt, reduce stock market and property values, and diminish popular consent to civil government

as hinted by the Tea Party movement.

State and national government responses to these crises will be more of the same: add controls on the marketplace and people's lives, make the dole even bigger, reduce economic and political liberty, and step up centralization and bureaucracy.

A sad prospect, to be sure.

But the collapse will give Christians an opportunity to engage in Christian rebuilding in a culture whose failures are increasingly obvious and whose debts on paper seem ever more unpayable.

Already we have proposed godly solutions to the educational disaster, namely Christian education in the home. If illiteracy, evolutionism, statism, and humanistic mind control are the disasters of the schooling we bravely avoid, what other sets of ruins can we consider and rescue ourselves and others from, for God's glory? Christians will be obligated to propose and practice godly solutions in new areas.

Before I hint what solutions Christian homeschoolers should consider as opportunities in the meltdown, it is important to consider an argument some Christians make against applying Christianity to public life. If we simply turn on Christian radio or Christian TV programming, the argument is presented there thoroughly—albeit indirectly. Christian programming is almost entirely focused on the individual—on his salvation, his sanctification, his adoption as a son of God. Almost exclusively in view is his personal walk with Christ; his

dealings with difficult times; the need God imposes on him to avoid temptation, to be faithful to wife, family, and the Savior, to allow the Holy Spirit to operate in his life as a Christian, to be serviceable to God as a God-fearing man. Christian exhortation and preaching focus exclusively on individual piety, the personal.

These are essential, but the scope of Christianity does not stop with the individual. What is excluded is any sense of the gospel touching human existence beyond that. The term for narrowly focused Christianity is pietism. This perspective was a reaction against a perceived too-great interest in the 1700s in Christian doctrine and theology (heart knowledge beats “head knowledge,” to oversimplify its claim). But the privatization of Christianity and its retreat from most fields of human endeavor except the individual soul has affected us all by shrinking the horizon in which our work as Christians is to be accomplished.

The prospect of a federal default on the national debt will destroy innumerable “entitlements” that have been part of the political and social landscape, some going back seventy-five years: Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, health reform, 401(k). While the national debt is about \$13.6 trillion in current paper dollars, the level of unfunded liabilities and political promises probably is in the \$100 trillion range. The best-known programs are just the tip of the iceberg upon which the national ship of state is slashing its hull. Loan guarantees and implicit political promises to a welter of connected special interests add to the atmospheric, theoretical total.

“Reforms” of federal and state programs will come too late or create a new set of cascading crises. As homeschoolers roll up their shirtsleeves and take up serious rebuilding, they will stand on

their labors of today in independency, self-reliance, Christian confidence, and obedience to God’s law and Word. Homeschoolers may have resorted to their own tents, as the Israelites did, for kitchen table teaching. But we can aid the commonweal if we are faithful to God in heart and intellect as follows:

Areas of Christian Rebuilding

Care of the elderly. The Scriptures give the family the financial means and authority to care for elderly or decrepit family members. The family is jealous of care for seniors, yet faces continuing theft from the state of resources it might otherwise use for such caregiving. If the state’s system turns insolvent, will we lead by example in caring for our own? What the Amish do in succoring their own was once universal in Christendom; might such dedication not return if the need for it becomes sharply felt?

Care of the sick. Christians are exhorted to care for one another, though for now insurance has kept mutual care on a strictly commercial and non-sympathetic basis. Christendom, especially in monasteries after the fall of Rome, specialized in the operation of hospitals in what R. J. Rushdoony in his *Christian History of the World* lectures calls a pioneering era. In a health emergency, Christians can network online or in person to raise funds for surgery or medication. Christian burden-sharing groups already exist and will play a greater role as ObamaCare takes over a large part of the U.S. economy and brings about strangulated cries of distress.

Care for the family. Loss of hope diminishes reproduction, as among Europeans, Chinese, and Russians. As Exodus records, Israel’s huge numerical growth despite the lash of Egyptian overseers is a model for us: we must bless God with large families despite oppression and economic trials. Thinking ahead and thankful for God’s blessings,

homeschoolers tend to have large families. In the day Social Security falters, they will take care of their own, with more generous ranks of offspring making that duty easier. In an added benefit, the covenant family provides a sanctuary amid mass illegal immigration and cultural comingling and dissolution.

Care for one’s neighbor and local economies. Centralization in government and business has been in progress for hundreds of years, and some analysts suggest its heyday is past. With computing and the internet, many establishment chokeholds on information and the flow of ideas are being shattered, making it possible for the political and commercial order to decentralize. Giant concerns, as their inefficiency and cost become more obvious, will devolve and become smaller, some predict. As the debt bomb blows up under successive pillars of the federal “safety net,” people will once again be free to consider the benefit of local economies, small enterprise, local capital, and doing business with neighbors. County and municipal governments may be devastated by the forewarned collapse of the municipal bond market (the insolvent capital of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, is being called the canary in the mine). Christian self-government will tend to be more favorably exercised when the magistracy envisioned in Romans 13 is either state or local (vs. federal).

In a local economy, manufacturing, services, buying, selling, investing, and capital are preferable if hometown. Honest money and local currencies may once again be possible. People will gain more in personal relationships and decline relationships that are abstract or with remote parties. A Christian social order, according to economist Gary North, tends to be horizontal, not vertical. Centralization and bureaucracy

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LIGHT AT EVENING TIME

By R. J. Rushdoony

Taken from Rushdoony's soon-to-be-released
second volume of *A Word in Season: Daily Messages on the Faith for All of Life*

One of the more moving verses of the Bible is Zechariah 14:7: "But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light."

Evening time means the coming of darkness. Zechariah says, however, that God reverses this process and can bring and does manifest light at evening time. The natural order is reversed. Light at evening time is a miracle.

What we are told is that this world and history do not follow the government of nature but of God, the Creator and Lord of all things. When the lights go out all over the world, when history seems headed only into a dead end and total disaster, God brings forth light. He changes the direction of history and regenerates men and redirects events and institutions to fulfill His purposes.

Darkness ahead? Of course. Daily, men and nations by their sins bring on a great darkness. All around us, the problems abound and increase. Men grow pessimistic about the future, and with good reason.

It is precisely in such a darkening evening time that again and again in history, God the Lord has brought forth light. Man's sin is a grim and ugly fact: it dirties history and darkens every age, and ours is more than a little clouded by its blight.

The great and ruling fact, however, is not sin but the Lord. Christ is Lord and King over all things, including sin, death, and darkness. At our evening time, He can bring forth light.

For this reason, Paul summons us always to rejoice and in everything to give thanks (Phil. 4:4, 6), because our God is He who makes all things work together for good (Rom. 8:28), and, at evening time, brings forth light.

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2. Van Til and Amsterdam

It was with sadness that Paul observed, "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel" (Rom. 9:6). With similar sadness it must be observed that they are not all of Amsterdam who are of Amsterdam.

What then does Amsterdam stand for? Calvinism had for some years been steadily on the decline; its defeat was all the more telling in that the intellectual calibre of Presbyterian and Reformed scholars was so clearly outstanding. The church by and large, however, increasingly rejected Calvinism, and the apologetics of these scholars had a declining impact and audience. In America, for example, the intellectual preeminence of the Calvinist scholars at Princeton was obvious, and there is no denying the greatness of its history to 1929. But that tradition, so richly appreciated by Van Til, nevertheless had as its assumption the belief that the natural man was able to do two things:

- a. to work up a natural theology that would show theism to be more probably true than any other theory of reality, and
- b. to show that Christianity is more probably true than any other theory of sin and redemption.

Behind this assumption lay two deadly presuppositions, first, the autonomy of the natural man, who could act as judge over reality, and, second, the impartiality of the natural man, who was expected to assess honestly an interpretation he was in war against. Calvin had emphasized the perversity of the natural man's reasoning and its vicious partiality; Calvinism could not produce an adequate apologetics with the presuppositions of the natural man. To expect man, the covenant-breaker, to be

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DESCRIPTION

From the Preface: "In these essays I have tried to show how our country has been in the throes of an ongoing socialist revolution since the turn of the last century. And it has been engineered by real people with real names who consider themselves to be Americans but who have been doing all in their power to change the form of government given us by our Founding Fathers. The two major underpinnings of socialist, ungodly, controlled society are public education and the income tax. We shall not be a free people until we get rid of both institutions."

In this book, Samuel Blumenfeld gets to the root of our crisis: our spiritual state and the need for an explicitly Christian form of education.

Blumenfeld leaves nothing uncovered. He examines the men, methods, and means to the socialist project to transform America into an outright tyranny by scientific controllers.

This book is not for the faint of heart. It's a wake up call to the church to make certain and deliberate plans to raise up a generation of Kingdom-builders.

Sheats ... *Unknown cont. from page 8*

35. Robert D. Linder, *The Political Ideas of Pierre Viret* (Geneva, 1964), 43.
36. Bruening, "Pierre Viret and Geneva," 194.
37. Cart, *Pierre Viret*, 133.
38. Barnaud, *Pierre Viret*, 565.
39. Frédéric Lichtenberger, *Encyclopédie des sciences religieuses, Tome XII* (Paris, 1882), 407. Author's translation.
40. Barnaud, *Pierre Viret*, 569.
41. Vuilleumier, *Notre Pierre Viret*, 244.
42. Barnaud, *Pierre Viret*, 567–568. Author's translation.
43. Linder, *Political Ideas*, 43.
44. Lyon Council to the Council of Geneva, November 18, 1562, quoted in Barnaud, *Pierre Viret*, 588. Author's translation.
45. Lyon Council to the Council of Geneva, November 22, 1562, quoted in Barnaud, *Pierre Viret*, 588. Author's translation.
46. Jean-Marc Berthoud, *Des Actes de L'Eglise* (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1993), 54. Author's translation.

Ertl ... *God's Minister cont. from page 17*

5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*, 119.
7. Henri Vuilleumier, *Notre Pierre Viret* (Lausanne, 1911), 116–117.
8. Bavaud, *Le Réformateur*, 334.
9. Heinrich Bullinger, Second Helvetic Confession of Faith (1566), Chapter 30, Of the Magistracy.
10. Guido de Bres, The Belgic Confession of Faith (1561), Article 36, The Civil Government.
11. Pierre Viret (Lausanne Disputation, 1536), Eighth Conclusion.
12. Linder, *Political Ideas*, 86.
13. *Ibid.*, 85.
14. Bullinger, Second Helvetic Confession of Faith (1566), Chapter 30, Of the Magistracy.

Duigon ... *Review cont. from page 19*

they only consider the fulfillment of the ambition they cherish, not examining whether their actual revenues are able to

sustain such utopian dreams" (p. 71).

Are we *sure* he was born 500 years ago?

More, Please!

Berthoud concludes, "It is, in my modest view, high time that the Church (and through her teaching all our nations) comes once more to listen to what Viret has to say of God's immutable purposes for men and our present most distressing condition" (p. 85).

Berthoud has given us a taste of Viret's teaching and left us eager for more. We can't bring the man back to life, but at long last we can bring back his books, so that "he being dead, yet speaketh." 🏠

Lee Duigon is a Christian free-lance writer and contributing editor for the Chalcedon Report. He has been a newspaper editor and reporter and a published novelist.

1. <http://pierreviret.org/translation.php>
2. C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters* (New York: HarperCollins, 1996 edition), 167–169.

Tulis ... *A Sketch cont. from page 21*

seem friendly to Satan and the wiles of sinful and ambitious men. Christ-influenced economies will grow personal and provincial, a reading of history suggests.

Retirement or continued productivity? This category overlaps those above. But I am thinking here of company-run retirement funds and 401(k)s that may not be available despite promises on paper. Government workers, promised giant pots of cash on retirement, may be the most vulnerable if they don't have a family support system. As the Social Security system falters over time after turning insolvent this year, families will feel acutely the pain of their paucity of savings. Much family capital has been lost to government as the SS tax rate is 12 percent of wages, but the fault for decapitalization

cuts both ways.

Families have spent too much on consumption and pleasure. Christian homeschoolers should lead by example in being thrifty, reusing old things, finding markets for used materials, and reducing their role as consumer in exchange for that of provider. Less bling, more substance. Less shopping, more capital for generations ahead. The ungodly fantasy of starting our eternal rest early, at age 65 as FDR's New Deal suggested, will certainly fade, and homeschool granddads in their 60s and 70s (their wisest years) will be their most productive as they remain in the work force.

Educational endeavors as public schools abandoned. Widespread failure in the debt-based economy will scare local governments out of the schools racket. That will open up entrepreneurs with homeschool backgrounds to providing educational services—online systems, tutoring services, lectures, conversation classes, apprenticeships, certification councils, mentorships of small groups, and the like. Parents once obligated by public schooling will have real choice among private options, with God's people pointing the way and offering their own lives as examples.

One question Christians should ask themselves is this: Does the Word of God teach me to think in terms of these opportunities? Or are the Scriptures all about how to obtain salvation for me and my family?

As the Rev. Joe Morecraft of Atlanta has said, "The Bible is true about everything on which it speaks, and it speaks about everything." If this assertion is true, homeschoolers and Christians can look into the coming thirty years not with dread, but excitement and anticipation. 🏠

David Tulis, married and the father of four, is a deacon at Brainerd Hills Presbyterian Church in Chattanooga, TN.

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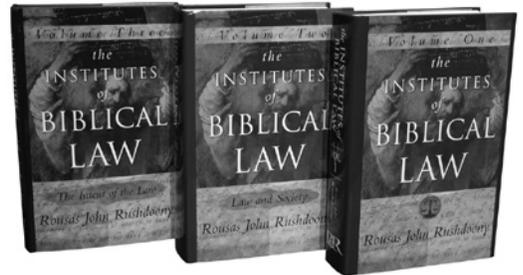
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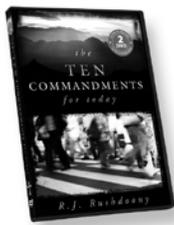
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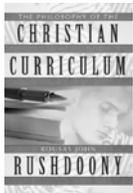
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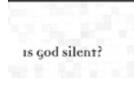
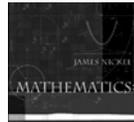


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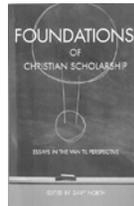


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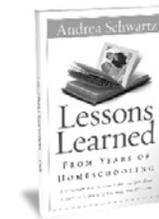


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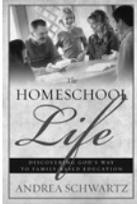


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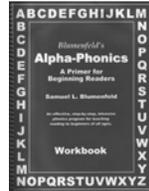
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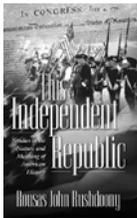


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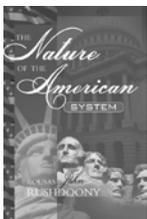


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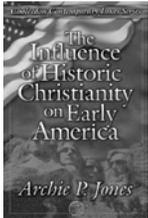
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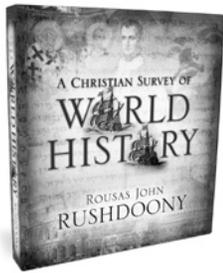
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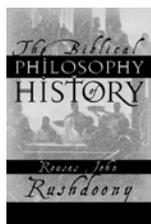
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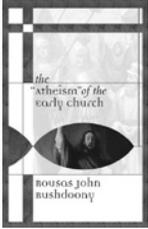


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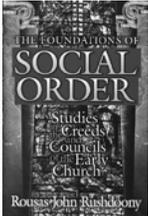
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Philosophy



The Death of Meaning

By Rousas John Rushdoony. For centuries on end, humanistic philosophers have produced endless books and treatises which attempt to explain reality without God or the mediatory work of His Son, Jesus Christ. Modern philosophy has sought to explain man and his thought process without acknowledging God, His Revelation, or man's sin. God holds all such efforts in derision and subjects their authors and adherents to futility. Philosophers who rebel against God are compelled to *abandon meaning itself*, for they possess neither the tools nor the place to anchor it. The works of darkness championed by philosophers past and present need to be exposed and reprovved. In this volume, Dr. Rushdoony clearly enunciates each major philosopher's position and its implications, identifies the intellectual and moral consequences of each school of thought, and traces the dead-end to which each naturally leads. There is only one foundation. Without Christ, meaning and morality are anchored to shifting sand, and a counsel of despair prevails. This penetrating yet brief volume provides clear guidance, even for laymen unfamiliar with philosophy.

Paperback, 180 pages, index, \$18.00



The Word of Flux: Modern Man and the Problem of Knowledge

By R.J. Rushdoony. Modern man has a problem with knowledge. He cannot accept God's Word about the world or anything else, so anything which points to God must be called into question. Man, once he makes himself ultimate, is unable to know anything but himself. Because of this impasse, modern thinking has become progressively pragmatic. This book will lead the reader to understand that this problem of knowledge underlies the isolation and self-torment of modern man. Can you know anything if you reject God and His revelation? This book takes the reader into the heart of modern man's intellectual dilemma.

Paperback, 127 pages, indices, \$19.00



To Be As God: A Study of Modern Thought Since the Marquis De Sade

By R.J. Rushdoony. This monumental work is a series of essays on the influential thinkers and ideas in modern times. The author begins with De Sade, who self-consciously broke with any Christian basis for morality and law. Enlightenment thinking began with nature as the only reality, and Christianity was reduced to one option among many. It was then, in turn, attacked as anti-democratic and anti-freedom for its dogmatic assertion of the supernatural. Literary figures such as Shelly, Byron, Whitman, and more are also examined, for the Enlightenment presented both the intellectual and the artist as replacement for the theologian and his church. Ideas, such as "the spirit of the age," truth, reason, Romanticism, persona, and Gnosticism are related to the desire to negate God and Christian ethics. Reading this book will help you understand the need to avoid the syncretistic blending of humanistic philosophy with the Christian faith.

Paperback, 230 pages, indices, \$21.00



By What Standard?

By R.J. Rushdoony. An introduction into the problems of Christian philosophy. It focuses on the philosophical system of Dr. Cornelius Van Til, which in turn is founded upon the presuppositions of an infallible revelation in the Bible and the necessity of Christian theology for all philosophy. This is Rushdoony's foundational work on philosophy.

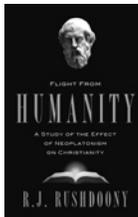
Hardback, 212 pages, index, \$14.00



The One and the Many

By R.J. Rushdoony. Subtitled *Studies in the Philosophy of Order and Ultimacy*, this work discusses the problem of understanding unity vs. particularity, oneness vs. individuality. "Whether recognized or not, every argument and every theological, philosophical, political, or any other exposition is based on a presupposition about man, God, and society—about reality. This presupposition rules and determines the conclusion; the effect is the result of a cause. And one such basic presupposition is with reference to the one and the many." The author finds the answer in the Biblical doctrine of the Trinity.

Paperback, 375 pages, index, \$26.00

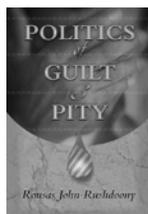


The Flight from Humanity

By R.J. Rushdoony. Subtitled *A Study of the Effect of Neoplatonism on Christianity*. Neoplatonism is a Greek philosophical assumption about the world. It views that which is form or spirit (such as mind) as good and that which is physical (flesh) as evil. But Scripture says all of man fell into sin, not just his flesh. The first sin was the desire to be as god, determining good and evil apart from God (Gen. 3:5). Neoplatonism presents man's dilemma as a metaphysical one, whereas Scripture presents it as a moral problem. Basing Christianity on this false Neoplatonic idea will always shift the faith from the Biblical perspective. The ascetic quest sought to take refuge from sins of the flesh but failed to address the reality of sins of the heart and mind. In the name of humility, the ascetics manifested arrogance and pride. This pagan idea of spirituality entered the church and is the basis of some chronic problems in Western civilization.

Paperback, 84 pages, \$13.00

Psychology

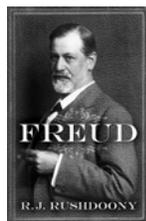


Politics of Guilt and Pity

By R.J. Rushdoony. From the foreword by Steve Schlissel: "Rushdoony sounds the clarion call of liberty for all who remain oppressed by Christian leaders who wrongfully lord it over the souls of God's righteous ones... I pray that the entire book will not only instruct you in the method and content of a Biblical worldview, but actually bring you further into the

glorious freedom of the children of God. Those who walk in wisdom's ways become immune to the politics of guilt and pity."

Hardback, 371 pages, index, \$20.00



Freud

By R.J. Rushdoony. For years this compact examination of Freud has been out of print. And although both Freud and Rushdoony have passed on, their ideas are still very much in collision. Freud declared war upon guilt and sought to eradicate the primary source to Western guilt — Christianity. Rushdoony shows conclusively the error of Freud's thought and the disastrous consequences of his influence in society.

Paperback, 74 pages, \$13.00



Revolt Against Maturity

By R.J. Rushdoony. The Biblical doctrine of psychology is a branch of theology dealing with man as a fallen creature marked by a revolt against maturity. Man was created a mature being with a responsibility to dominion and cannot be understood from the Freudian child, nor the Darwinian standpoint of a long biological history. Man's history is a short one

filled with responsibility to God. Man's psychological problems are therefore a resistance to responsibility, i.e. a revolt against maturity.

Hardback, 334 pages, index, \$18.00

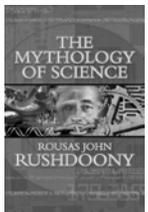


The Cure of Souls: Recovering the Biblical Doctrine of Confession

By R. J. Rushdoony. In *The Cure of Souls: Recovering the Biblical Doctrine of Confession*, R. J. Rushdoony cuts through the misuse of Romanism and modern psychology to restore the doctrine of confession to a Biblical foundation—one that is covenantal and Calvinistic. Without a true restoration of Biblical confession, the Christian's walk is impeded by the remains of sin. This volume is an effort in reversing this trend.

Hardback, 320 pages with index, \$26.00

Science

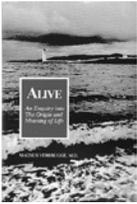


The Mythology of Science

By R.J. Rushdoony. This book points out the fraud of the empirical claims of much modern science since Charles Darwin. This book is about the religious nature of evolutionary thought, how these religious presuppositions underlie our modern intellectual paradigm, and how they are deferred to as sacrosanct by institutions and disciplines far removed from the empirical sciences. The "mythology" of modern science is its religious devotion to the myth of evolution. Evolution "so expresses or coincides with the contemporary spirit that its often radical contradictions and absurdities are never apparent, in that they express the basic presuppositions, however untenable, of everyday life and thought." In evolution, man is the highest expression of intelligence and reason, and such thinking will not yield itself to submission to a God it views as a human cultural creation, useful, if at all, only in a cultural context. The basis of science and all other thought will ultimately be found in a higher ethical and philosophical context; whether or not this is seen as religious does not change the nature of that context. "Part of the mythology of modern evolutionary science is its failure to admit that it is a faith-based paradigm."

Paperback, 134 pages, \$17.00

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Alive: An Enquiry into the Origin and Meaning of Life

By Dr. Magnus Verbrugge, M.D. This study is of major importance as a critique of scientific theory, evolution, and contemporary nihilism in scientific thought. Dr. Verbrugge, son-in-law of the late Dr. H. Dooyeweerd and head of the Dooyeweerd Foundation, applies the insights of Dooyeweerd's thinking to the realm of science. Animism and humanism in scientific theory are brilliantly discussed.

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Creation According to the Scriptures

Edited by P. Andrew Sandlin. Subtitled: *A Presuppositional Defense of Literal Six-Day Creation*, this symposium by thirteen authors is a direct frontal assault on all waffling views of Biblical creation. It explodes the "Framework Hypothesis," so dear to the hearts of many respectability-hungry Calvinists, and it throws down the gauntlet to all who believe they can maintain a consistent view of Biblical infallibility while abandoning literal, six-day creation. It is a must reading for all who are observing closely the gradual defection of many allegedly conservative churches and denominations, or who simply want a greater grasp of an orthodox, God-honoring view of the Bible.

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Economics



Making Sense of Your Dollars: A Biblical Approach to Wealth

By Ian Hodge. The author puts the creation and use of wealth in their Biblical context. Debt has put the economies of nations and individuals in dangerous straits. This book discusses why a business is the best investment, as well as the issues of debt avoidance and insurance. Wealth is a tool for dominion men to use as faithful stewards.

Paperback, 192 pages, index, \$12.00

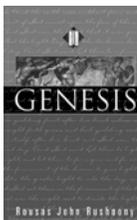


Larceny in the Heart: The Economics of Satan and the Inflationary State

By R.J. Rushdoony. In this study, first published under the title *Roots of Inflation*, the reader sees why envy often causes the most successful and advanced members of society to be deemed criminals. The reader is shown how envious man finds any superiority in others intolerable and how this leads to a desire for a leveling. The author uncovers the larceny in the heart of man and its results. See how class warfare and a social order based on conflict lead to disaster. This book is essential reading for an understanding of the moral crisis of modern economics and the only certain long-term cure.

Paperback, 144 pages, indices, \$18.00

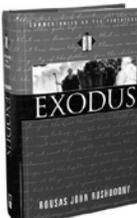
Biblical Studies



Genesis, Volume I of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

Genesis begins the Bible, and is foundational to it. In recent years, it has become commonplace for both humanists and churchmen to sneer at anyone who takes Genesis 1-11 as historical. Yet to believe in the myth of evolution is to accept trillions of miracles to account for our cosmos. Spontaneous generation, the development of something out of nothing, and the blind belief in the miraculous powers of chance, require tremendous faith. Theology without literal six-day creationism becomes alien to the God of Scripture because it turns from the God Who acts and Whose Word is the creative word and the word of power, to a belief in process as god. The god of the non-creationists is the creation of man and a figment of their imagination. The entire book of Genesis is basic to Biblical theology. The church needs to re-study it to recognize its centrality.

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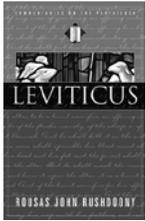
Exodus, Volume II of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

Essentially, all of mankind is on some sort of an exodus. However, the path of fallen man is vastly different from that of the righteous. Apart from Jesus Christ and His atoning work, the exodus of a fallen humanity means only a further descent from sin into death. But in Christ, the exodus is now a glorious ascent into the justice and dominion of the everlasting Kingdom of God. Therefore, if we are to better understand the gracious provisions made for us in the "promised land" of the New Covenant, a thorough examination into the historic path of Israel as described in the book of Exodus is essential. It is to this end that this volume was written.

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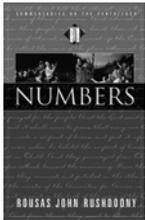


Leviticus, Volume III of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

Much like the book of Proverbs, any emphasis upon the practical applications of God's law is readily shunned in pursuit of more "spiritual" studies. Books like Leviticus are considered dull, overbearing, and irrelevant. But man was created in God's image and is duty-bound to develop the implications of that image by obedience to God's law. The book of Leviticus contains over ninety references to the word holy. The purpose, therefore, of this third book of the Pentateuch is to demonstrate the legal foundation of holiness in the totality of our lives. This present study is dedicated to equipping His church for that redemptive mission.

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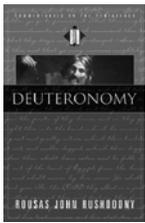


Numbers, Volume IV of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

The Lord desires a people who will embrace their responsibilities. The history of Israel in the wilderness is a sad narrative of a people with hearts hardened by complaint and rebellion to God's ordained authorities. They were slaves, not an army. They would recognize the tyranny of Pharaoh but disregard the servant-leadership of Moses. God would judge the generation He led out of captivity, while training a new generation to conquer Canaan. The book of Numbers reveals God's dealings with both generations. The rebellious in Israel are judged incessantly while a census is taken to number the armies of Israel according to their tribes. This was an assessment of strength and a means to encourage the younger generation to view themselves as God's army and not Pharaoh's slaves.

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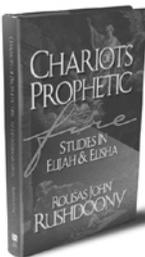
Deuteronomy, Volume V of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

If you desire to understand the core of Rushdoony's thinking, this commentary on *Deuteronomy* is one volume you must read. The covenantal structure of this last book of Moses, its detailed listing of both blessings and curses, and its strong presentation of godly theocracy provided Rushdoony with a solid foundation from which to summarize the central tenets of a truly Biblical worldview—one that is solidly established upon Biblical Law, and one that is assured to shape the future.

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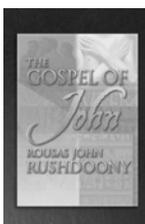
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Chariots of Prophetic Fire: Studies in Elijah and Elisha

By R. J. Rushdoony. See how close Israel's religious failure resembles our own! Read this to see how the modern Christian is again guilty of Baal worship, of how inflation-fed prosperity caused a loosening of morals, syncretism and a decline in educational performance. As in the days of Elijah and Elisha, it is once again said to be a virtue to tolerate evil and condemn those who do not. This book will challenge you to resist compromise and the temptation of expediency. It will help you take a stand by faith for God's truth in a culture of falsehoods.

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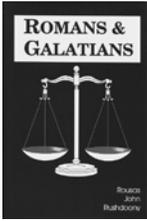


The Gospel of John

By R.J. Rushdoony. In this commentary the author maps out the glorious gospel of John, starting from the obvious parallel to Genesis 1 ("In the beginning was the Word") and through to the glorious conclusion of Christ's death and resurrection. Nothing more clearly reveals the gospel than Christ's atoning death and His resurrection. They tell us that Jesus Christ has destroyed the power of sin and death. John therefore deliberately limits the number of miracles he reports in order to point to and concentrate on our Lord's death and resurrection. The Jesus of history is He who made atonement for us, died, and was resurrected. His life cannot be understood apart from this, nor can we know His history in any other light. This is why John's "testimony is true," and, while books filling the earth could not contain all that could be said, the testimony given by John is "faithful."

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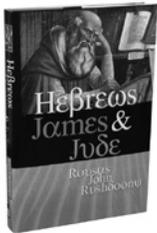
Romans and Galatians

By R.J. Rushdoony. From the author's introduction: "I do not disagree with the liberating power of the Reformation interpretation, but I believe that it provides simply the beginning of our understanding of Romans, not its conclusion...."

The great problem in the church's interpretation of Scripture has been its ecclesiastical orientation, as though God speaks only to the church, and

commands only the church. The Lord God speaks in and through His Word to the whole man, to every man, and to every area of life and thought... To assume that the Triune Creator of all things is in His word and person only relevant to the church is to deny His Lordship or sovereignty. If we turn loose the whole Word of God onto the church and the world, we shall see with joy its power and glory. This is the purpose of my brief comments on Romans."

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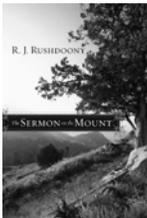


Hebrews, James and Jude

By R.J. Rushdoony. There is a resounding call in Hebrews, which we cannot forget without going astray: "Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach" (13:13). This is a summons to serve Christ the Redeemer-King fully and faithfully, without compromise. When James, in his epistle, says that faith without works is dead, he tells us that faith is not a mere matter of words, but it is of necessity

a matter of life. "Pure religion and undefiled" requires Christian charity and action. Anything short of this is a self-delusion. James's letter is a corrective the church needs badly. Jude similarly recalls us to Jesus Christ's apostolic commission, "Remember ye the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 17). Jude's letter reminds us of the necessity for a new creation beginning with us, and of the inescapable triumph of the Kingdom of God.

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Sermon on the Mount

By R. J. Rushdoony. So much has been written about the Sermon on the Mount, but so little of the commentaries venture outside of the matters of the heart. The Beatitudes are reduced to the assumed meaning of their more popular portions, and much of that meaning limits our concerns to downplaying wealth, praying in secret, suppressing our worries,

or simply reciting the Lord's Prayer. The Beatitudes are the Kingdom commission to the new Israel of God, and R. J. Rushdoony elucidates this powerful thesis in a readable and engaging commentary on the world's greatest sermon.

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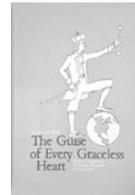


The Church Is Israel Now

By Charles D. Provan. For the last century, Christians have been told that God has an unconditional love for persons racially descended from Abraham. Membership in Israel is said to be a matter of race, not faith. This book repudiates such a racist viewpoint and abounds in Scripture references which show that the blessings of

Israel were transferred to all those who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

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The Guise of Every Graceless Heart

By Terrill Irwin Elniff. An extremely important and fresh study of Puritan thought in early America. On Biblical and theological grounds, Puritan preachers and writers challenged the autonomy of man, though not always consistently.

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The Great Christian Revolution

By Otto Scott, Mark R. Rushdoony, R.J. Rushdoony, John Lofton, and Martin Selbrede. A major work on the impact of Reformed thinking on our civilization. Some of the studies, historical and theological, break new ground and provide perspectives previously unknown or neglected.

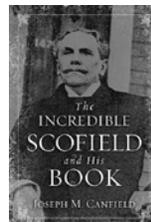
Hardback, 327 pages, \$22.00



Keeping Our Sacred Trust

Edited by Andrew Sandlin. The Bible and the Christian Faith have been under attack in one way or another throughout much of the history of the church, but only in recent times have these attacks been perceived *within* the church as a healthy alternative to orthodoxy. This book is a trumpet blast heralding a full-orbed, Biblical, orthodox Christianity. The hope of the modern world is not a passive compromise with passing heterodox fads, but aggressive devotion to the time-honored Faith "once delivered to the saints."

Paperback, 167 pages, \$19.00

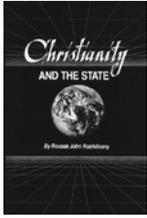


The Incredible Scofield and His Book

By Joseph M. Canfield. This powerful and fully documented study exposes the questionable background and faulty theology of the man responsible for the popular Scofield Reference Bible, which did much to promote the dispensational system. The story is disturbing in its historical account of the illusive personality canonized as a dispensational saint and calls into question the seriousness of his motives and scholarship.

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Taking Dominion



Christianity and the State

By R.J. Rushdoony. You'll not find a more concise statement of Christian government, nor a more precise critique of contemporary statism. This book develops the Biblical view of the state against the modern state's humanism and its attempts to govern all spheres of life. Whether it be the influence of Greek thought, or the present manifestations of fascism,

this dynamic volume will provide you with a superb introduction to the subject. It reads like a collection of essays on the Christian view of the state and the return of true Christian government.

Hardback, 192 pages, indices, \$18.00



Tithing and Dominion

By Edward A. Powell and R.J. Rushdoony. God's Kingdom covers all things in its scope, and its immediate ministry includes, according to Scripture, the ministry of grace (the church), instruction (the Christian and homeschool), help to the needy (the diaconate), and many other things. God's appointed means for financing His Kingdom activities is centrally the tithe. This work affirms that the Biblical

requirement of tithing is a continuing aspect of God's law-word and cannot be neglected. This book is "must reading" as Christians work to take dominion in the Lord's name.

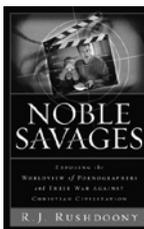
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Salvation and Godly Rule

By R.J. Rushdoony. Salvation in Scripture includes in its meaning "health" and "victory." By limiting the meaning of salvation, men have limited the power of God and the meaning of the Gospel. In this study R. J. Rushdoony demonstrates the expanse of the doctrine of salvation as it relates to the rule of the God and His people.

Paperback, 661 pages, indices, \$35.00

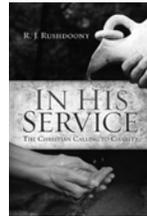


Noble Savages: Exposing the Worldview of Pornographers and Their War Against Christian Civilization

By R. J. Rushdoony. In this powerful book *Noble Savages* (formerly *The Politics of Pornography*) Rushdoony demonstrates that in order for modern man to justify his perversion he must reject the Biblical doctrine of the fall of man. If there is no fall,

the Marquis de Sade argued, then all that man does is normative. Rushdoony concluded, "[T]he world will soon catch up with Sade, unless it abandons its humanistic foundations." In his conclusion Rushdoony wrote, "Symptoms are important and sometimes very serious, but it is very wrong and dangerous to treat symptoms rather than the underlying disease. Pornography is a symptom; it is not the problem." What is the problem? It's the philosophy behind pornography — the rejection of the fall of man that makes normative all that man does. Learn it all in this timeless classic.

Paperback, 161 pages, \$18.00



In His Service: The Christian Calling to Charity

By R. J. Rushdoony. The Christian faith once meant that a believer responded to a dark world by actively working to bring God's grace and mercy to others, both by word and by deed. However, a modern, self-centered church has isolated the faith to a pietism that relinquishes charitable responsibility to the state. The end result has been the empowering

of a humanistic world order. In this book, Rushdoony elucidates the Christian's calling to charity and its implications for Godly dominion. In an age when Christian action is viewed in political terms, a return to Christian works of compassion and Godly service will help usher in a return of the reign of God as no piece of legislation ever could.

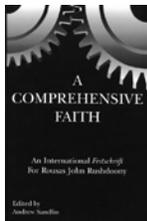
Hardback, 232 pages, \$23.00



Roots of Reconstruction

By R.J. Rushdoony. This large volume provides all of Rushdoony's *Chalcedon Report* articles from the beginning in 1965 to mid-1989. These articles were, with his books, responsible for the Christian Reconstruction and theonomy movements. More topics than could possibly be listed. Imagine having 24 years of Rushdoony's personal research for just \$20.

Hardback, 1124 pages, \$20.00



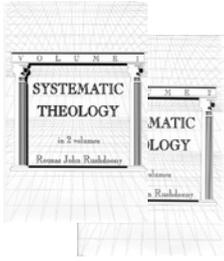
A Comprehensive Faith

Edited by Andrew Sandlin. This is the surprise *Festschrift* presented to R.J. Rushdoony at his 80th birthday celebration in April, 1996. These essays are in gratitude to Rush's influence and elucidate the importance of his theological and philosophical contributions in numerous fields. Contributors include Theodore Letis, Brian Abshire, Steve Schlissel, Joe

Morecraft III, Jean-Marc Berthoud, Byron Snapp, Samuel Blumenfeld, Christine and Thomas Schirmacher, Herbert W. Titus, Owen Fourie, Ellsworth McIntyre, Howard Phillips, Joseph McAuliffe, Andrea Schwartz, David Estrada-Herrero, Stephen Perks, Ian Hodge, and Colonel V. Doner. Also included is a forward by John Frame and a brief biographical sketch of R. J. Rushdoony's life by Mark Rushdoony. This book was produced as a "top-secret" project by Friends of Chalcedon and donated to Ross House Books. It is sure to be a collector's item one day.

Hardback, 244 pages, \$23.00

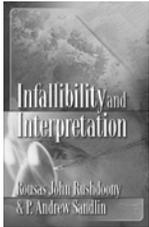
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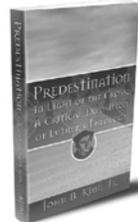


Infallibility and Interpretation

By Rousas John Rushdoony & P. Andrew Sandlin. The authors argue for infallibility from a distinctly presuppositional perspective. That is, their arguments are unapologetically circular because they believe all ultimate claims are based on one's beginning assumptions. The question of Biblical infallibility rests ultimately in one's belief about the character

of God. They believe man is a creature of faith, not, following the Enlightenment's humanism, of reason. They affirm Biblical infallibility because the God Whom the Bible reveals could speak in no other way than infallibly, and because the Bible in which God is revealed asserts that God alone speaks infallibly. Men deny infallibility to God not for intellectual reasons, but for ethical reasons—they are sinners in rebellion against God and His authority in favor of their own. The authors wrote convinced that only by a recovery of faith in an infallible Bible and obedience to its every command can Christians hope to turn back evil both in today's church and culture.

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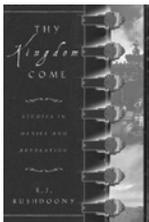
Sovereignty

By R. J. Rushdoony. The doctrine of sovereignty is a crucial one. By focusing on the implications of God's sovereignty over all things, in conjunction with the law-word of God, the Christian will be better equipped to engage each and every area of life. Since we are called to live in this world, we must bring to bear the will of our Sovereign Lord in all things. With clear prose and stimulating

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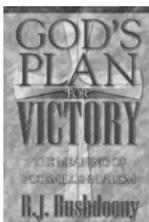
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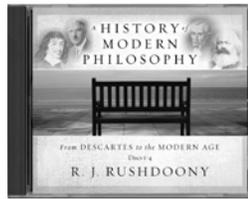
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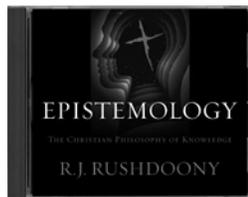
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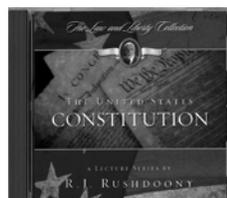
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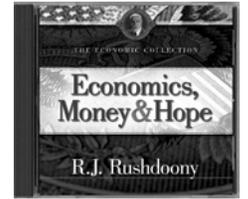
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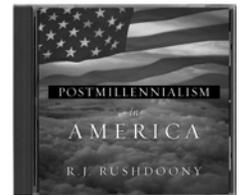
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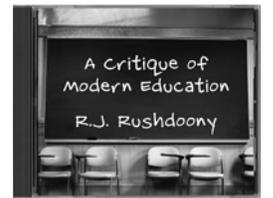
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